VIZ PREMIERE COMICS
$3.75 USA/$5.00 CAN

2001 NIGHTS™

NO. 1

Story and Art by

YUKINOBU HOSHINO

Orion

Night 1: EARTHGLOW

Orion

THIS IS ORION. WE'VE SHUT OFF OMS-2, ENTERING THE REQUIRED ORBIT ON SCHEDULE. ALL POINTS CLEAR.

ROGER! CONTROL TO ORION--

...ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE ACHIEVED ORBIT, PLEASE DO NOT OPEN THE CARGO BAY UNTIL WE GIVE THE WORD. THIS MISSION IS OF THE UTMOST SECRECY...

ROGER, CONTROL! NO FURTHER REPORTS UNLESS NECESSARY. OVER!

I SAID, "ROGER," BUT I DON'T GET IT...

IF WE DON'T OPEN THE CARGO BAY, THE RADIATOR WON'T BE EXPOSED.

I KNOW, BEN. THE EXCESS HEAT WILL BE TRAPPED IN THE SHIP.

WHAT SORT OF PAYLOAD IS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO ENDANGER THE ORION-- NOT TO MENTION OUR LIVES ?

NO SIGN...

...I THOUGHT I MIGHT SEE A MUSHROOM CLOUD OVER THE PERSIAN GULF, CAPTAIN.

SO YOU BELIEVE THE RUMOR THAT THEY'LL USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT THE MID EAST FRONT?

WELL, THIS WOULD BE A *GREAT* VANTAGE POINT...

...WE'D BE THE *ONLY* WITNESSES.

HOGWASH! ARE YOU SAYING THAT THE STAKES ARE HIGH ENOUGH IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO GO ALL OUT?

THE CRAP ASIDE--IT'S TIME TO CARRY OUT OUR NEXT INSTRUCTION. YOU'RE THE PILOT, BEN. I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU.

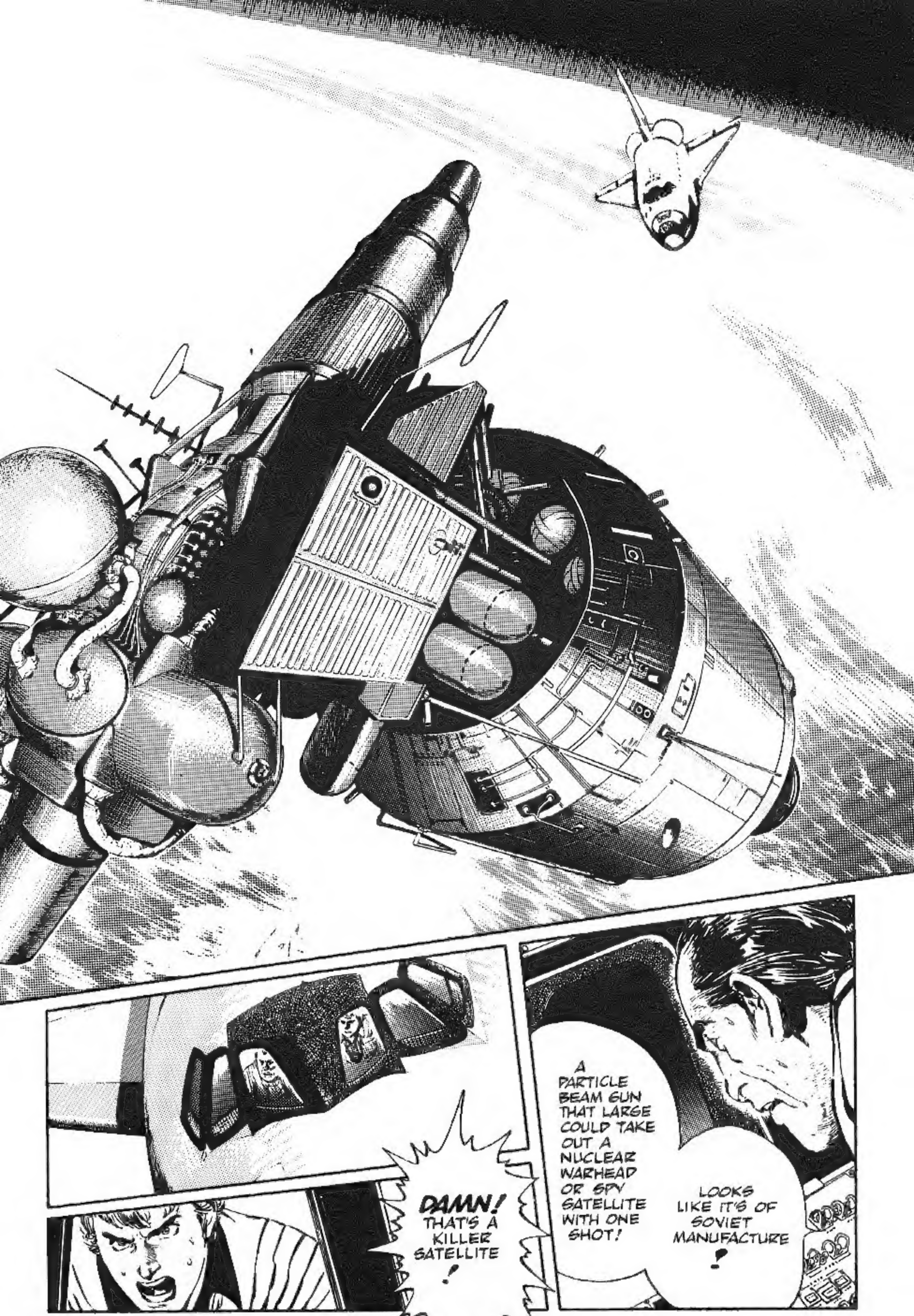
KUK-KLIK

OKAY, CAPTAIN, PREPARE FOR COURSE CHA-- *WHAT?!*

THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE SCREEN! LIKE A MAN-MADE SATELLITE.

I'M TRYING TO IDENTIFY IT FOR YOU, BEN. THERE ARE MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND SATELLITES IN EARTH ORBIT ALREADY...

...SEVENTY PERCENT OF THEM MILITARY JOBS.


DAMN! THAT'S A KILLER SATELLITE!
A PARTICLE BEAM GUN THAT LARGE COULD TAKE OUT A NUCLEAR WARHEAD OR SPY SATELLITE WITH ONE SHOT!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S OF SOVIET MANUFACTURE!

LET'S GO SLOW, BEN-- BUT STICK TO THE COURSE AS PLOTTED!

BUT, CAPTAIN-- THIS ORBIT IS LIKE RUNNING THE GAUNTLET! THE SCREEN IS FULL OF THEM!

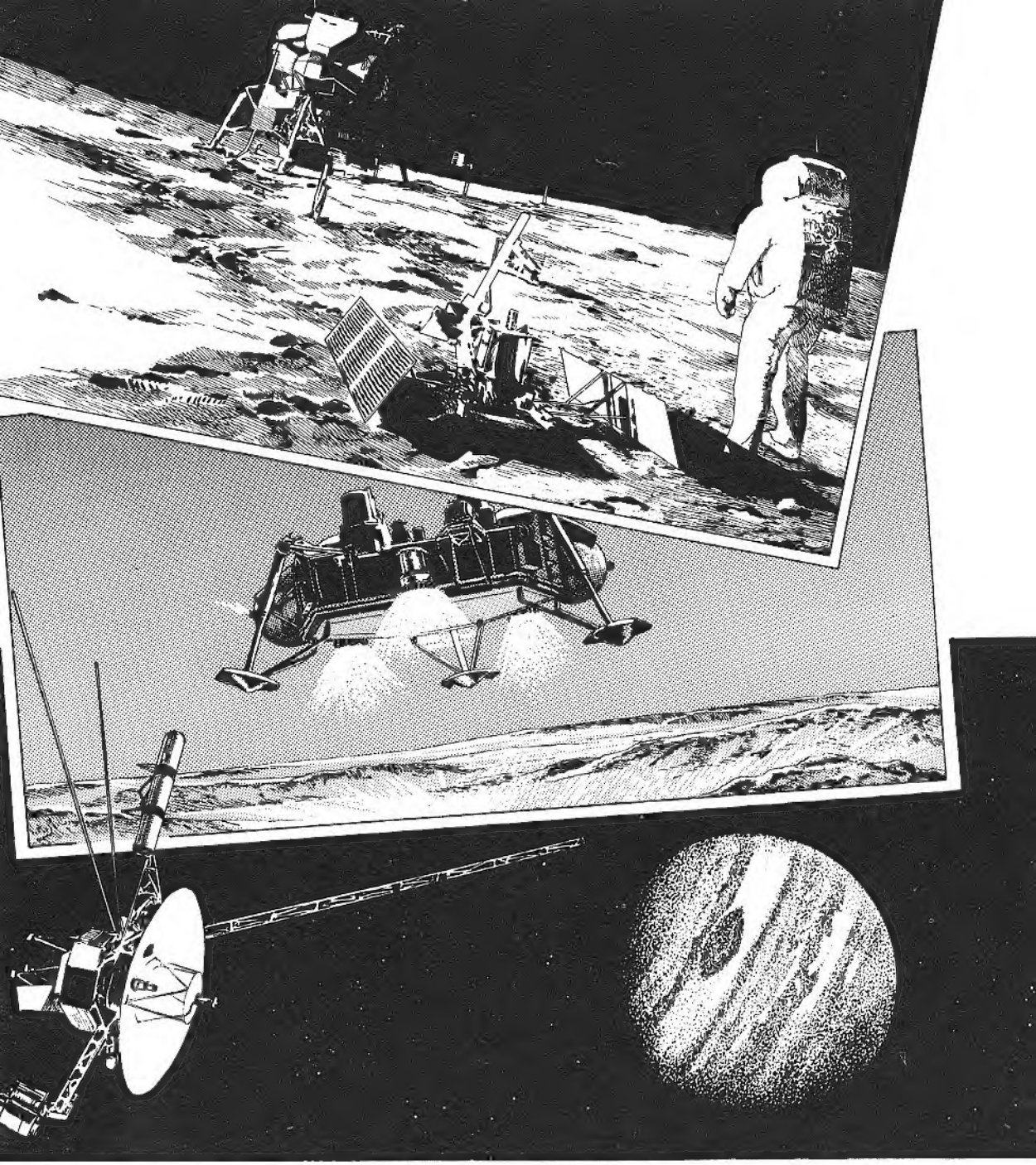
WE'LL BE HIT AT ANY MOMENT!

THEY HAVEN'T BRIEFED US ON THE *PURPOSE* OF THIS MISSION!

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT WE'RE CARRYING IN THE BAY!

A MISSILE LAUNCHER? A CHEMICAL LASER WEAPON? NO MATTER WHAT WE'RE CARRYING, IT'S BOUND TO MEAN TROUBLE!

ALL THIS TRAINING-- JUST FOR THE HONORABLE MISSION OF BRINGING WAR TO THE STARS!



...DAMN...

HEY! DON'T LEAVE YOUR SEAT!
I CAN'T TAKE THE TENSION, CAPTAIN.

THE GUYS STUCK AT MISSION CONTROL...

...THEY DON'T EVER GET TO FEEL HOW *FREE*, HOW *UNLIMITED*, SPACE REALLY IS...

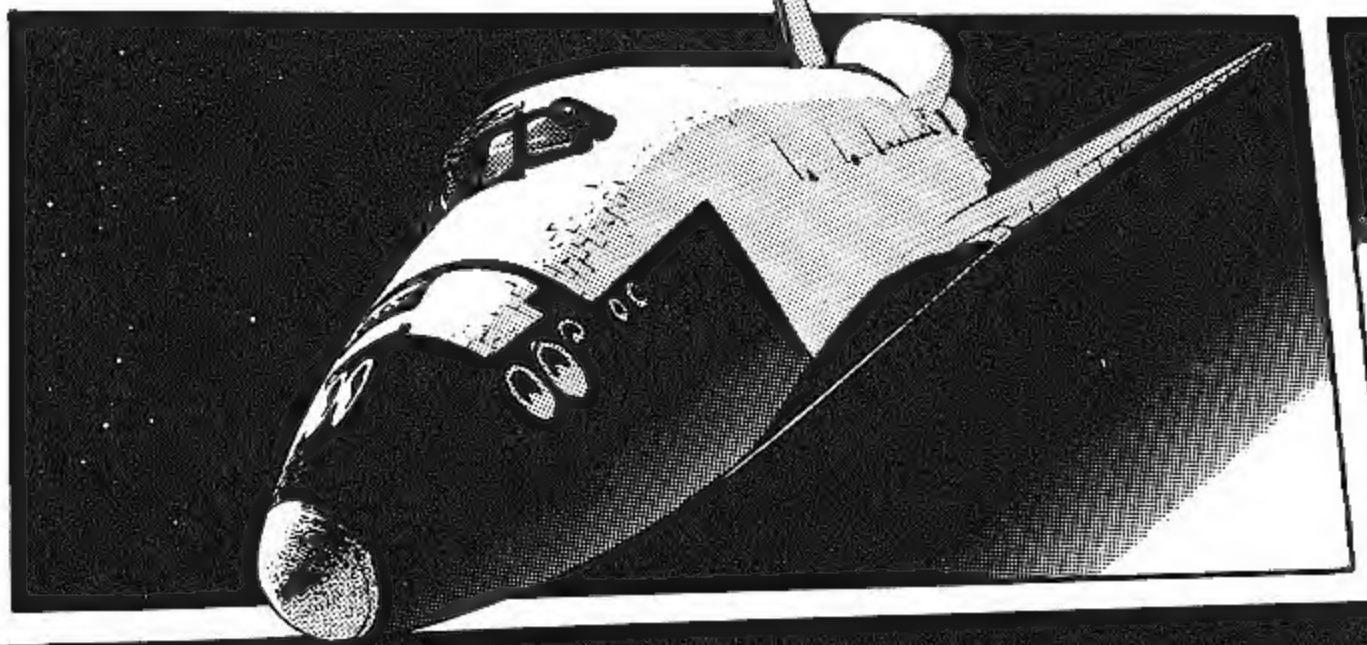
...BUT NO ONE UNDERSTANDS, THOSE BASTARDS AT THE PENTAGON SURE AS *HELL* DON'T UNDERSTAND!

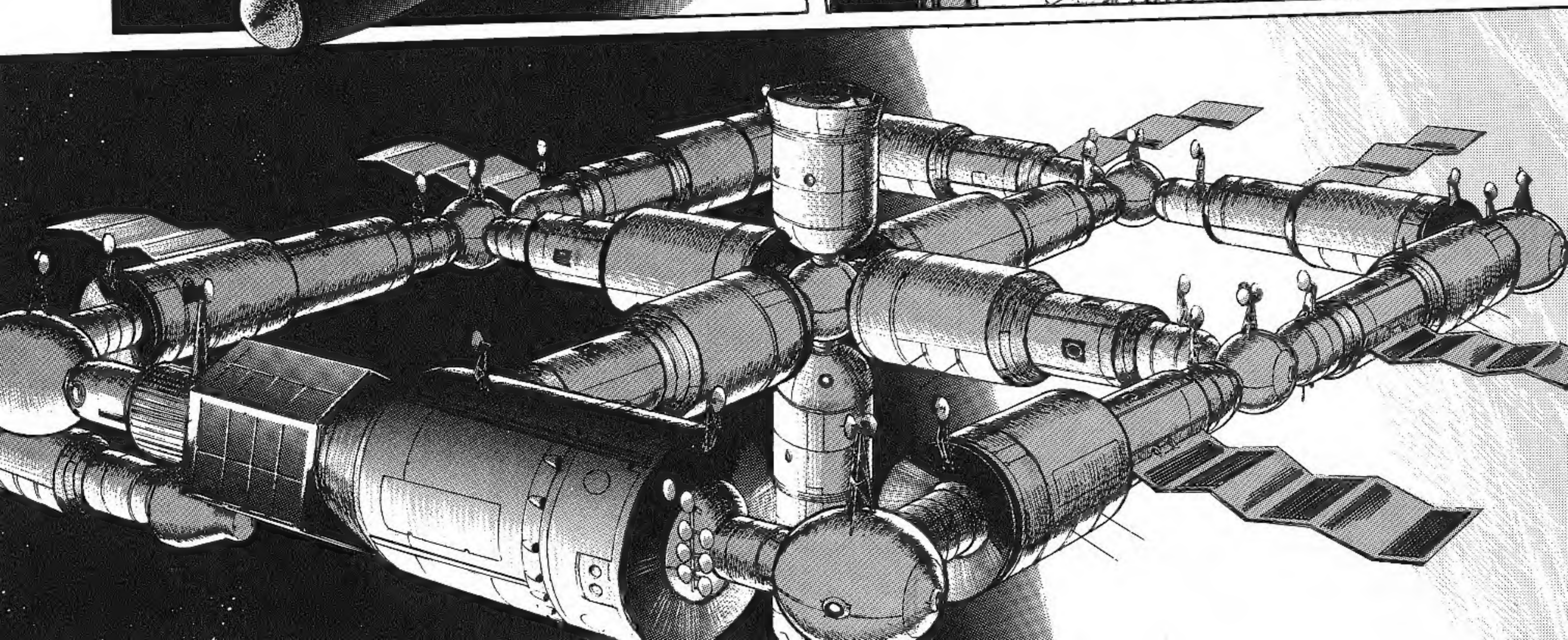
WE'VE FINALLY BROKEN FREE, WE HUMANS...

IF THEY FIGHT *NOW*, IT WILL ALL HAVE BEEN FOR NOTHING!

ALL OUR EFFORTS-- MEANINGLESS!

OUR FIRST STEPS INTO SPACE, JUST AN EMPTY DREAM!





LOOK! THAT'S THE L.N. TOLSTOY!
THE U.S.S.R.'S HUNDRED-MAN JUMBO STATION...
...I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS ALREADY COMPLETED! WE'VE BEEN BEATEN AT OUR OWN GAME...!
MY GOD! THAT CHAIN OF KILLER SATELLITES WAS JUST ITS FRONT LINE DEFENSE. WE'VE REALLY STEPPED IN IT NOW, CAPTAIN!
NO... IT CAN'T BE...
...COULD THE ULTIMATE MISSION BE THE DESTRUCTION OF TOLSTOY?
NASA
United States
IF THE LOAD IN THE CARGO BAY IS AN ANTI-TOLSTOY SATELLITE...
...THEN WE'RE ABOUT TO START WORLD WAR III!
AV FIRE ALM
AV BAY 2
SAFE
SMOKE DETECT
CABIN
PAYLOAD
LEFT DECK
RIGHT DECK
AV BAY 1
AV BAY 1
AV BAY 2
AV BAY 2
AV BAY 3
AV BAY 3
CIRCUIT TEST
SENSOR RESET
wheeoop wheeoop wheeoo

FIRE IN THE MIDDLE DECK-- THE AVIONICS* SECTION!

WEAR P.O.S** IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!

THAT'S THE *ENEMY* OUT THERE!

FIRE EXTINGUISHING SYSTEM NUMBER 2 IN OPERATION!

CAPTAIN! WE'VE GOT TO REPORT TO MISSION CONTROL!

I KNOW, BUT WE'VE HAD NO ORDERS!

THIS IS ORION! THE AIR COOLING SYSTEM HAS OVERHEATED DUE TO OUR INACCESSIBLE RADIATOR!

FIRE UNDER CONTROL, BUT PLEASE GIVE US INSTRUCTIONS!

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE? WHY ARE WE--

CONTROL TO ORION! IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT WITH THE CARGO BAY? IS ITS LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM IN NORMAL OPERATION?

LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM?

* SPACE NAVIGATION ELECTRONIC CONTROL SYSTEM

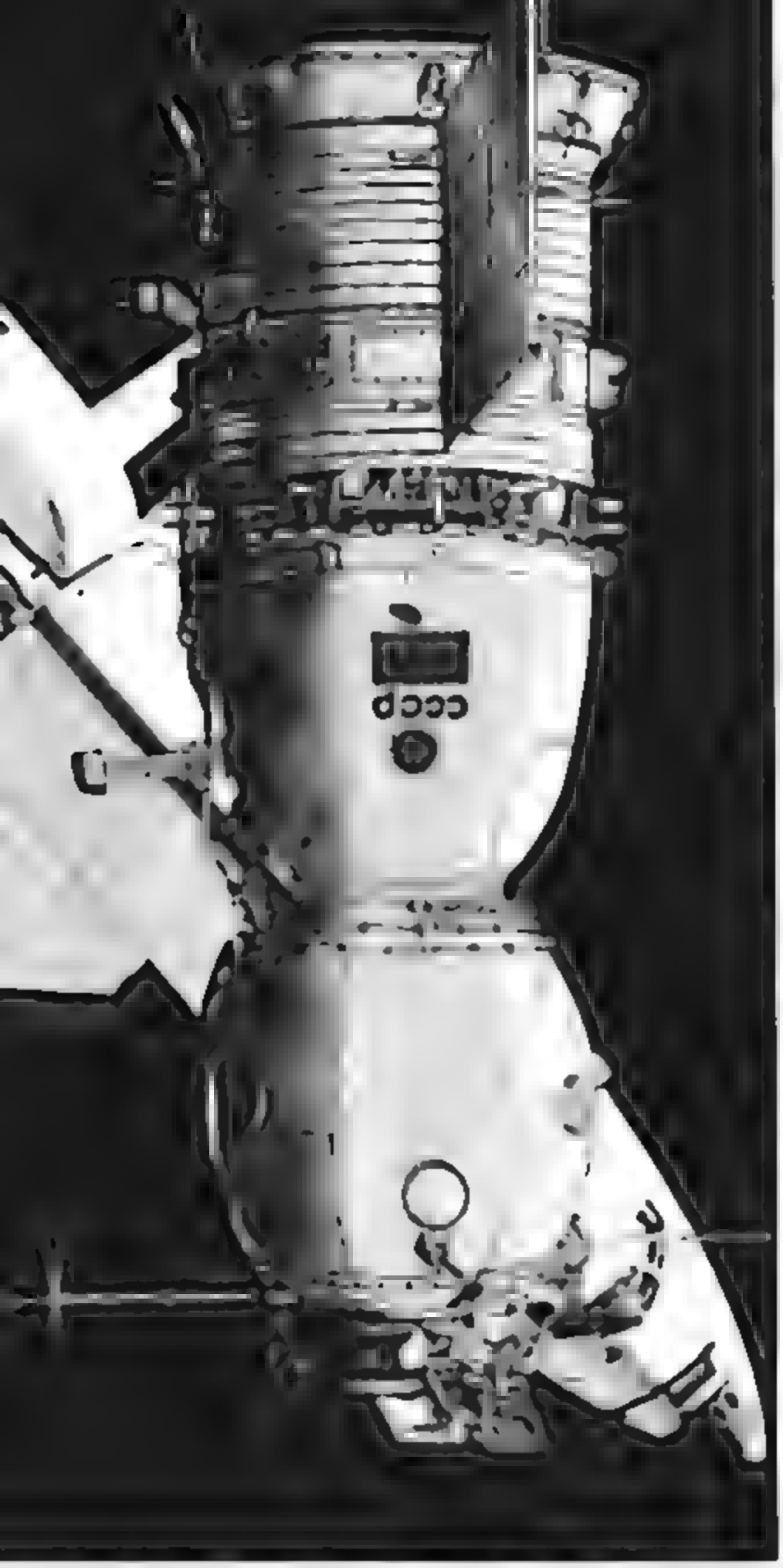
** PORTABLE OXYGEN SYSTEM

IS THE LOAD IN THE CARGO BAY SOMETHING HUMAN T!

NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! JUST FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS!

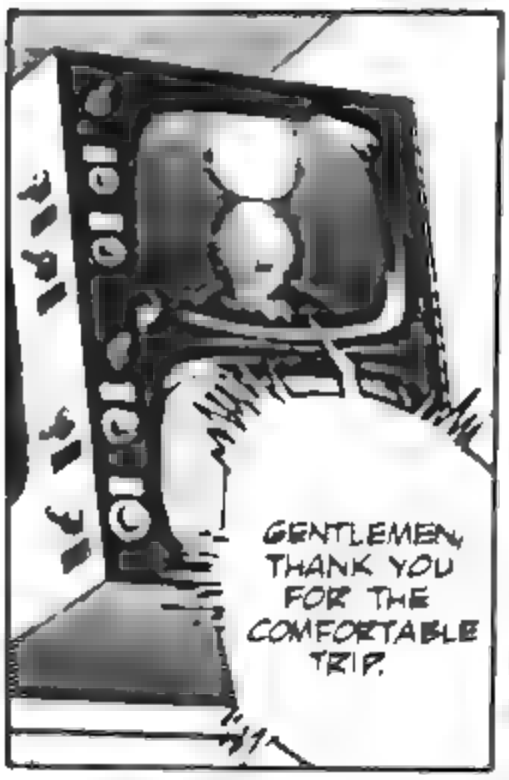
FORTUNATELY, THE SHUTTLE SEEMS TO BE OPERATING PERFECTLY NOW, OPEN THE CARGO BAY DOORS!

SUSPICIOUS MOVES IN THIS SITUATION COULD BE

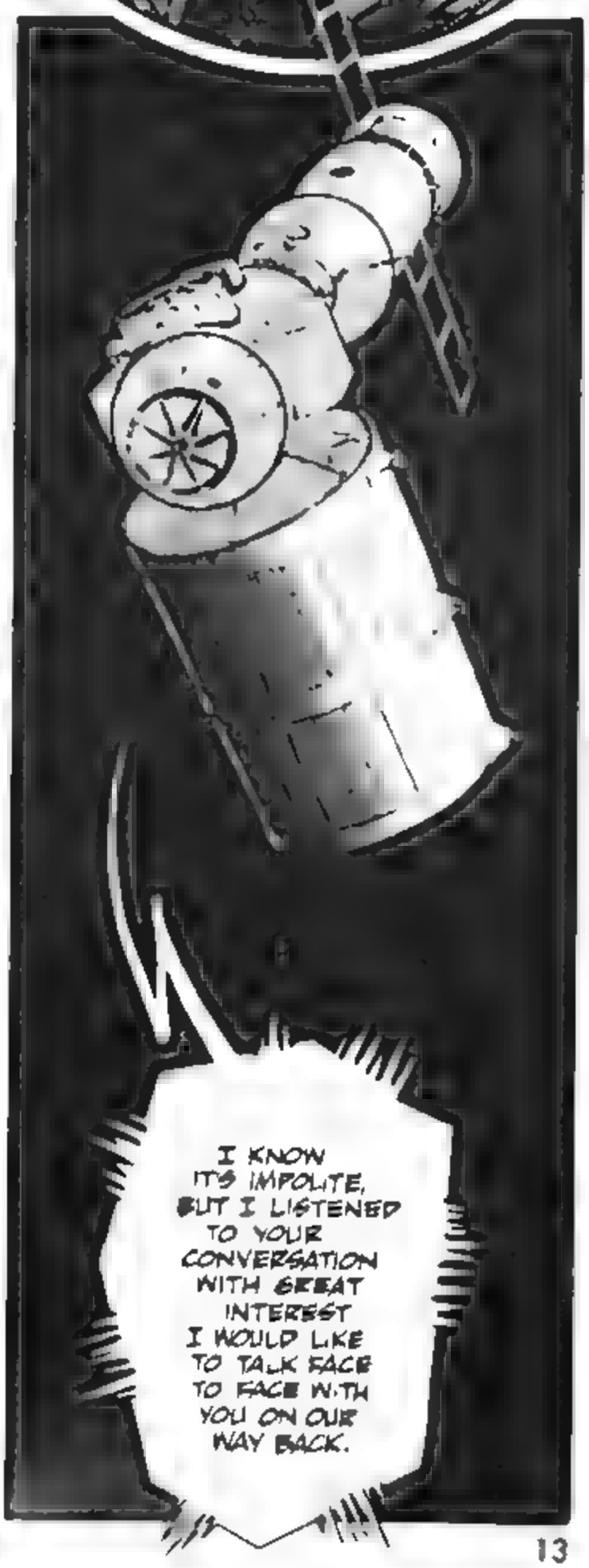

CCCP

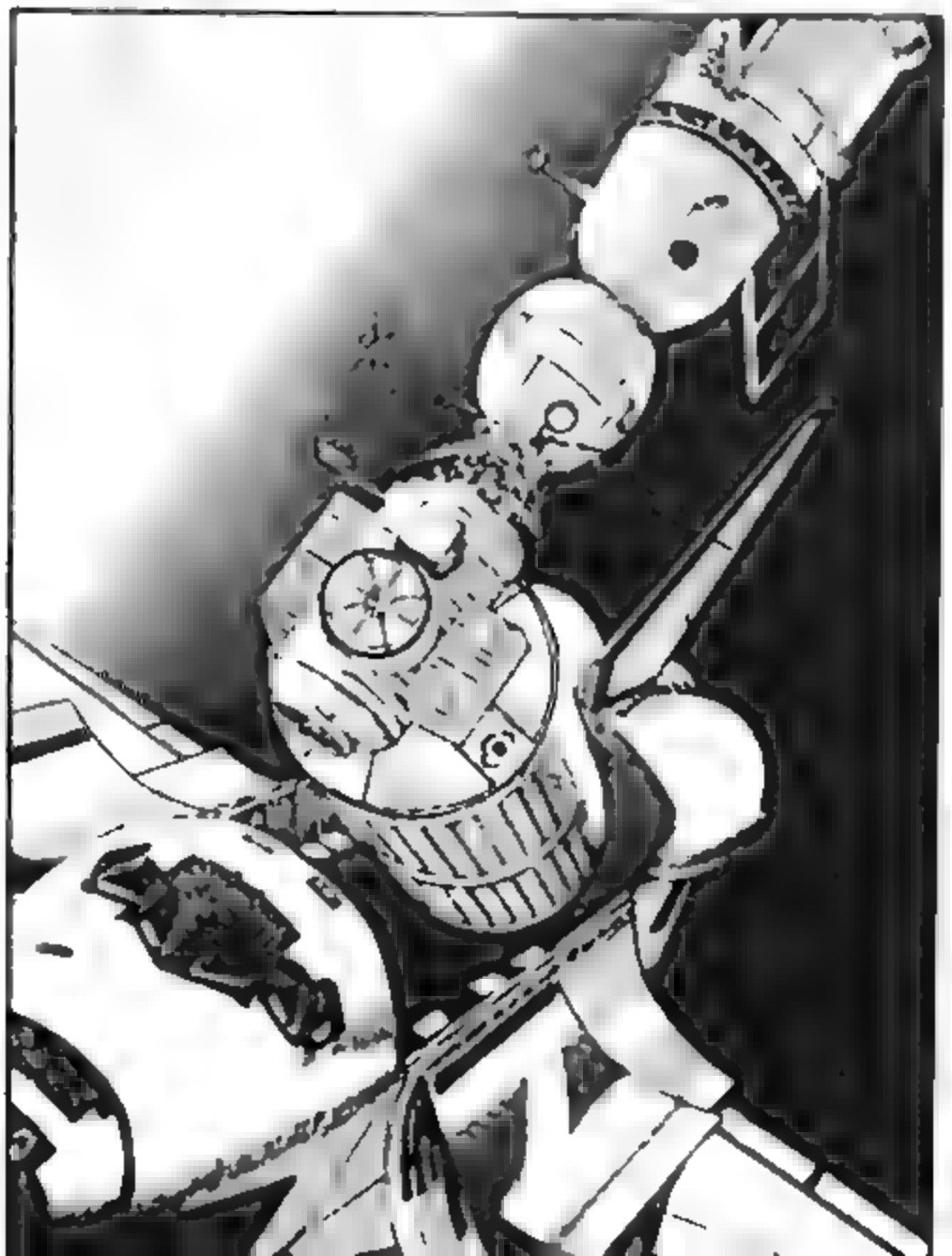
NOW APPROACH
YOU FOR DOCKING.
PLEASE REMAIN
MOTIONLESS.

TOOM


GENTLEMEN, THANK YOU FOR THE COMFORTABLE TRIP.

HHA ?


I KNOW IT'S IMPOLITE, BUT I LISTENED TO YOUR CONVERSATION WITH GREAT INTEREST I WOULD LIKE TO TALK FACE TO FACE WITH YOU ON OUR WAY BACK.



CAPTA.N I KNOW I'VE HEARD THAT VOICE SOMEWHERE..

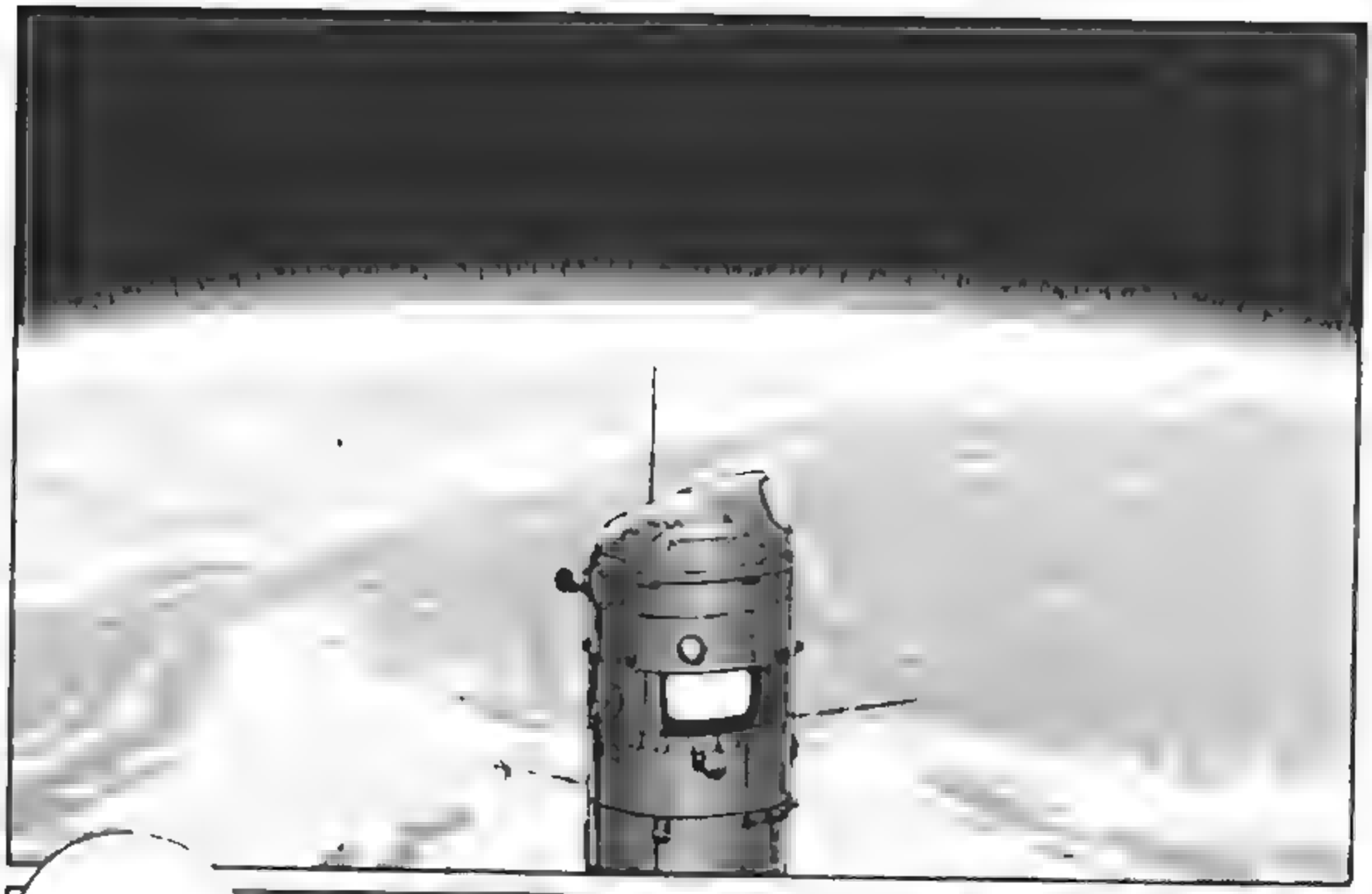
YES

LIFEL

A WONDERFUL SPACE STATION ISN'T IT?

"L. N. TOLSTOY" WAR-- AND PEACE.

THIS WAY PLEASE HIS HONOR AND THE INTER-PRETER ONLY PLEASE.


"I CAN SEE THE EARTH. SO BEAUTIFUL, SO BLUE.."
AT LAST, I UNDERSTAND THE WORDS OF YOUR FIRST COSMONAUT..
I HAVE LONGED TO TALK WITH YOU LIKE THIS. AT A PLACE WHERE WE CAN SEE THE EARTH
WHY WOULD WE POSSIBLY WANT TO SPLIT SUCH BEAUTY IN TWO? FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT THE REAL ISSUES BECOME SO CLEAR--
--CLEAR TO BOTH OF US TOGETHER
NEVER BEFORE HAS SUCH A MEETING BEEN POSSIBLE. TECHNOLOGY, COOPERATION-- POWERFUL THINGS.

NOW, MR PREM.ER, LET'S TALK ABOUT MAT-TERS ON THAT PLANET FOR A WHILE. THERE ARE A LOT OF PROBLEMS TO SOLVE BEFORE WE'LL BE READY TO TAKE TO THE STARS.

NOW WHAT ARE YOU TH.NK NG ABOUT ?

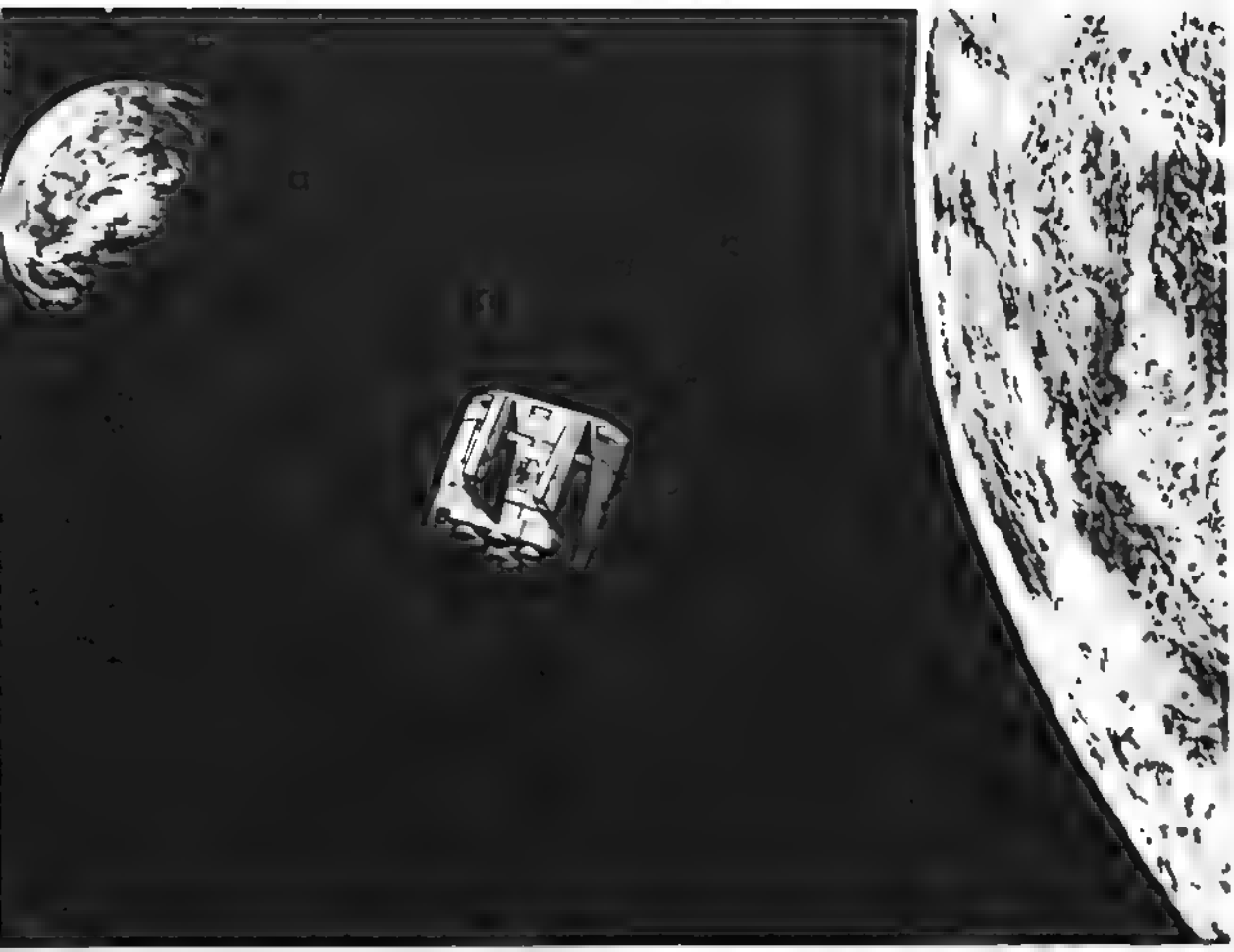
OH.

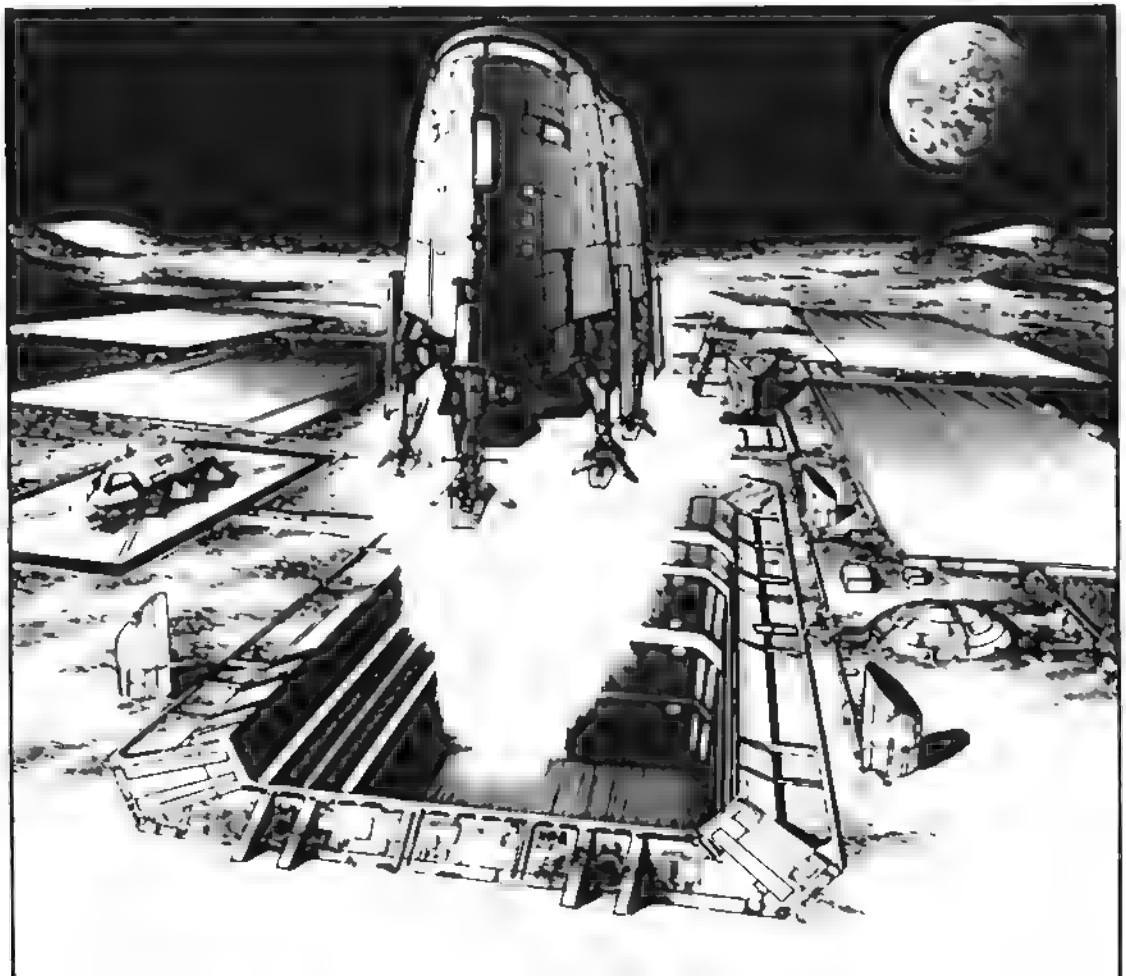
. JUST WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PLANET .T IS. FULL OF THE GLOW OF L FE AM DST THE DARKNESS OF THE UNIVERSE

YES, MR PRESIDENT, LET'S TALK.

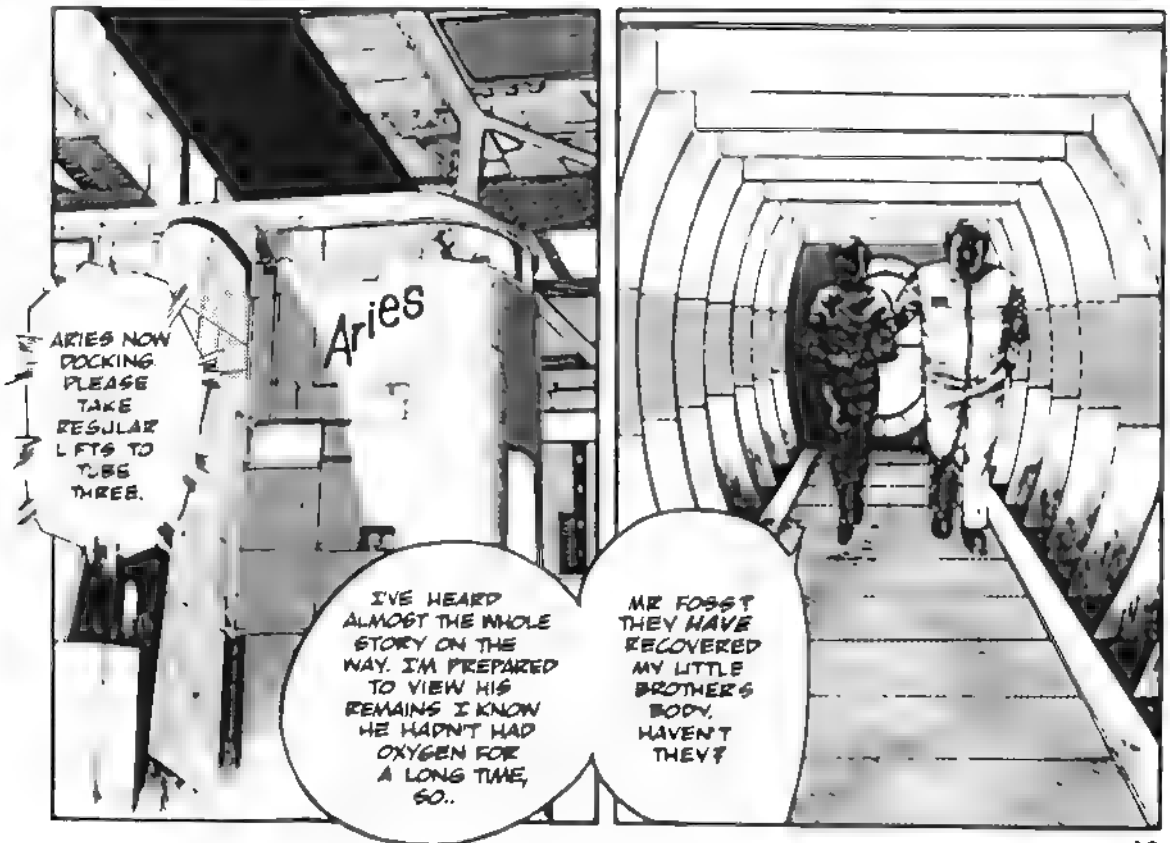
Night 1: fin

I AM SINKING. INTO THE BOTTOM OF A DEEP BLUE SEA...
SINKING IN AN OCEAN FULL OF LIVES, TWINKLING.





Night 2: SEA OF FERTILITY


Aries
ARIES NOW DOCKING. PLEASE TAKE REGULAR LIFTS TO TUBE THREE.
I'VE HEARD ALMOST THE WHOLE STORY ON THE WAY. I'M PREPARED TO VIEW HIS REMAINS I KNOW HE HADN'T HAD OXYGEN FOR A LONG TIME, SO..
MR FOSS? THEY HAVE RECOVERED MY LITTLE BROTHER'S BODY, HAVEN'T THEY?

!

ZZZZT
I AM SINKING...
INTO THE BOTTOM OF A DEEP BLUE SEA...

SST . SINKING IN AN OCEAN FULL OF LIVES, TWINKLING.. ZZZT

beeeep

THIS IS THE LAST REPORT FROM PETE. IT WOULD SEEM THAT, ALONE UNDERGROUND, HE WAS SOMEHOW INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT

AS YOU KNOW, THE MOONBASE IS LOCATED AT THE CENTER OF THE SEA OF FERTILITY WE'VE BEEN CONDUCTING TRIAL DIGS AT A FEW PLACES AROUND THERE.

OUR MOST RECENT FINDS HAVE BEEN OLD METEORITE CHUNKS

THIS IS ONE OF THEM. IT SEEMS YOUR BROTHER FOUND THE METEORITES INTERESTING ENOUGH TO DO SOME INVESTIGATING ON HIS *OWN*.

COULD YOU TAKE ME..? TO THE PLACE...?

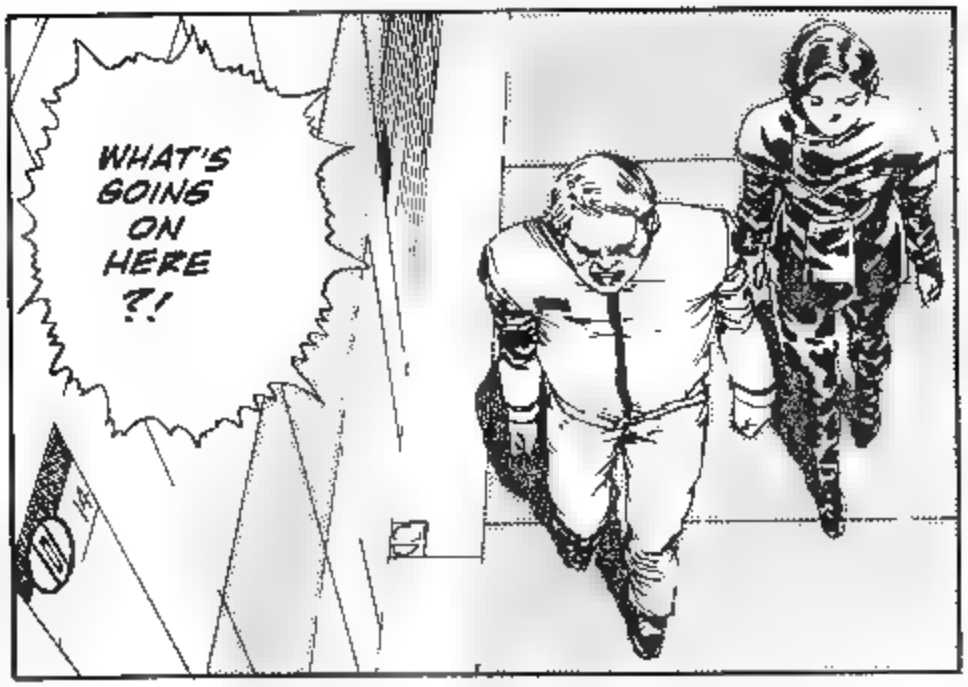
IF YOU WISH, DIRECTOR STEPHENS WE'LL JUST CONSIDER IT AN ON-THE-SPOT INSPECTION

I'LL ACCOMPANY YOU THE MOON BUS WILL LEAVE HERE IN ONE HOUR. IT'S OUR LAST SEARCH PARTY, I'M AFRAID

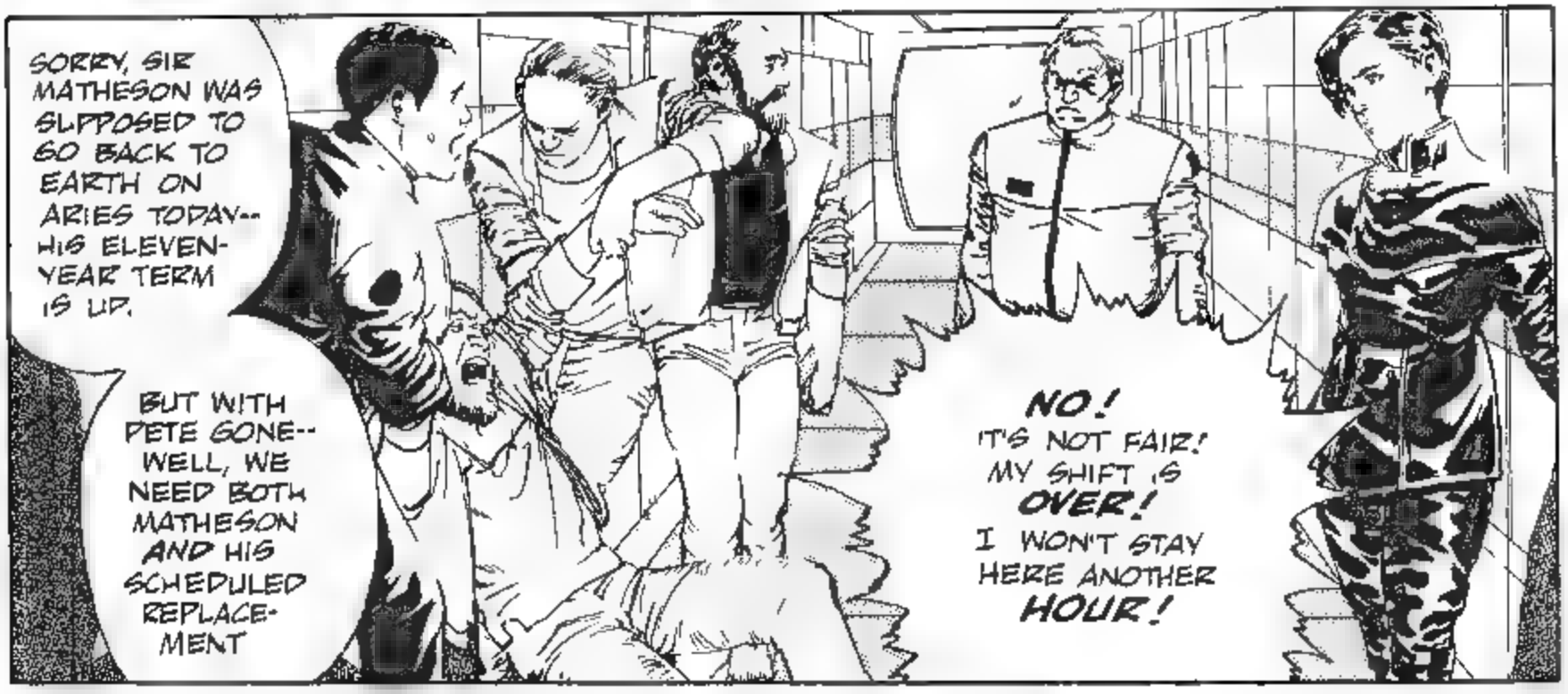
chik

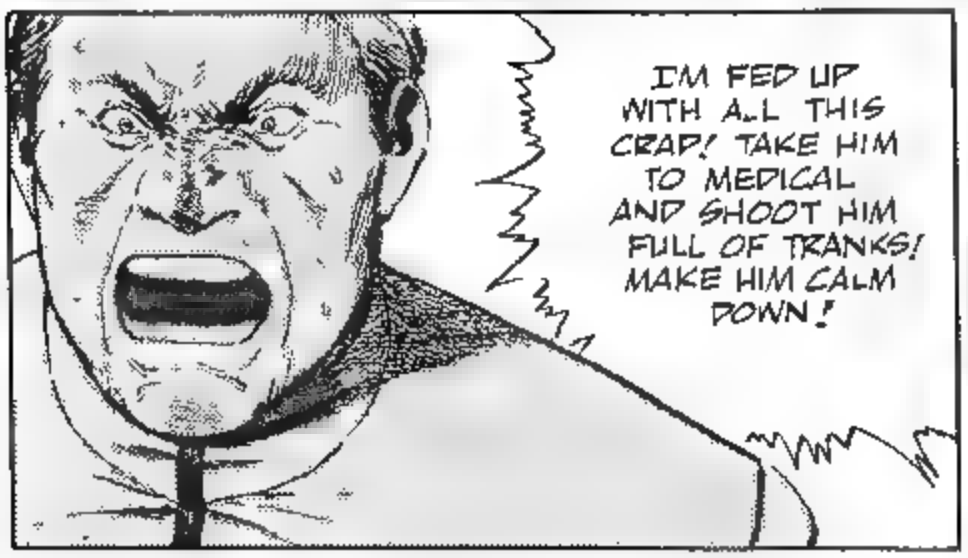
I SEE VERY WELL..

..I'LL TAKE HIS BELONGINGS BACK TO EARTH WITH ME WHEN I GO..

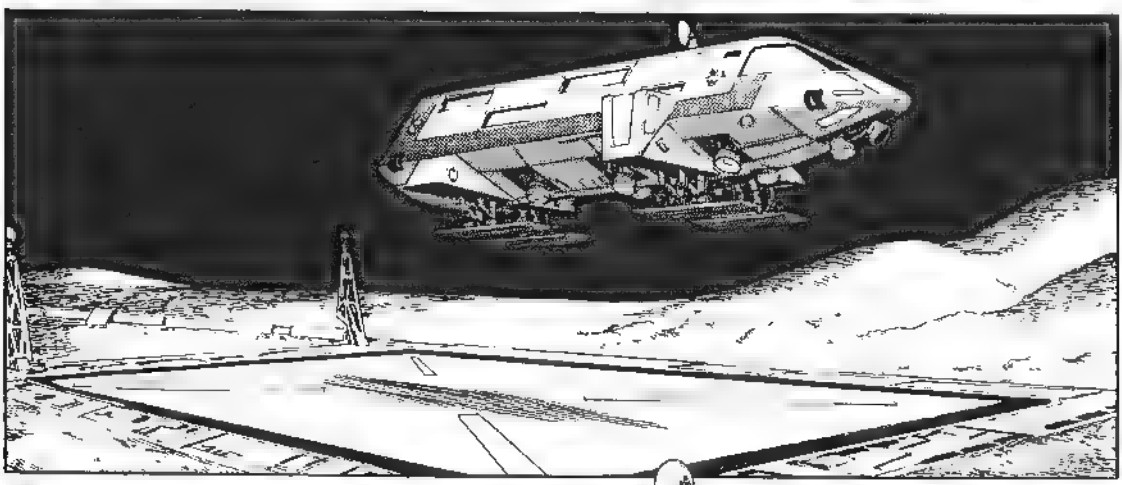

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE ?!

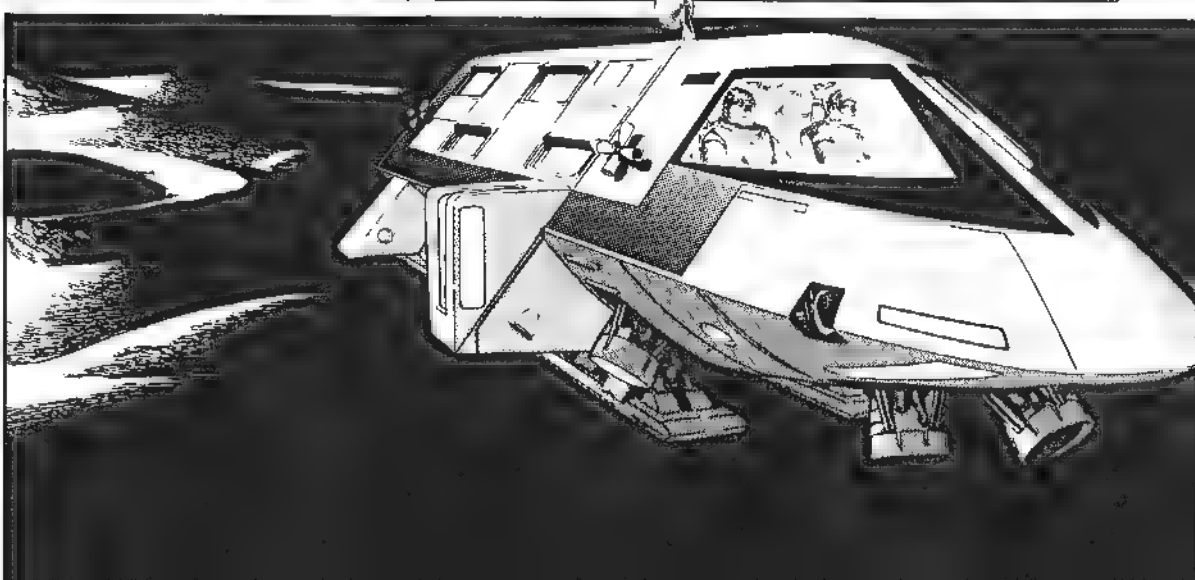
EARTH!
PLEASE, DAMN YOU!
I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO EARTH!


SORRY, SIR MATHESON WAS SUPPOSED TO GO BACK TO EARTH ON ARIES TODAY-- HIS ELEVEN-YEAR TERM IS UP.
BUT WITH PETE GONE-- WELL, WE NEED BOTH MATHESON AND HIS SCHEDULED REPLACE-MENT
NO! IT'S NOT FAIR! MY SHIFT IS OVER! I WON'T STAY HERE ANOTHER HOUR!


I'M FED UP WITH ALL THIS CRAP! TAKE HIM TO MEDICAL AND SHOOT HIM FULL OF TRANKS! MAKE HIM CALM DOWN!

THE MOON MAKES PEOPLE'S HEARTS FROZEN MY SISTER.





THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST PLACES WE VISITED, MS. STEPHENS. WE NAMED IT "THE SEA OF FERTILITY." IT REVEALS THE MOON'S ORIGINAL FORM

APOLLO STAYED ON THE MOON FOR JUST A FEW DAYS, BUT WE'VE LIVED HERE ALMOST A YEAR NOW.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO LIVE IN SUCH A WORLD, A WORLD WITH NO BLUE SKY, NO SMELL OF AIR, NO SOUND OF WIND?

AN ENDLESS WORLD, BARREN AND STILL AS DEATH. IT TRIES TO STEAL YOUR MIND

PERHAPS WE SHOULDN'T COME TO SUCH A PLACE. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ?

THE MOON MAKES PEOPLE'S HEARTS FROZEN, MY SISTER

I'M NOT ASKING YOU ABOUT THAT, K D' YOU KNOW THE POSITION I'M IN DON'T YOU?

NOW TELL ME, IS THE TRIAL DIGGING OF MINERAL RESOURCES GOING AS SCHEDULED?

YOU KNOW HOW MUCH OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET IS SET ASIDE TO MAINTAIN THE MOONBASE, DON'T YOU?

IT'S THE LARGEST PROJECT IN U.S. HISTORY!

IT'S MY JOB TO RAISE THE FUNDS FOR IT--AND THAT MEANS MORE THAN JUST KEEPING POLITICIANS HAPPY. I'VE ALSO GOT TO INTEREST THE MAJOR CORPORATIONS.

THEY WANT PROOF THAT THEIR INVESTMENT WILL TURN A PROFIT

WITHOUT THAT PROOF, THEY'LL WITHDRAW EVERY PENNY FROM THE SPACE PROGRAM.

IF THAT HAPPENS WE CAN KISS THE MOONBASE GOODBYE--AND MY JOB WITH IT!

KID TELL ME--HAVE THERE BEEN *ANY* RESULTS FROM THE TRIAL DIGGING?

ARE THERE *ANY* PROMISING MINERAL RESOURCES?

SISTER, THERE IS ONE SECOND'S DELAY BETWEEN US...

...I'M A LIGHT-SECOND AWAY FROM YOU RIGHT NOW.

THIS IS NOT A PLACE FOR HUMAN BE NGS. IT S A WORLD COMPLETELY CUT OFF FROM EVERYTHING THAT COMFORTS THE HUMAN MIND.

BUT THERE IS SOMETHING WORSE THAN JUST THE BARRENNESS OF THE MOON CAN YOU GUESS WHAT IT IS?

IMAGINATION. WHAT IF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE IS LIKE THIS? THEN WHAT ?

F ALL WE COME ACROSS IN THE COSMOS IS DEATH CRUEL AND EMPTY...

...IF THERE IS NO SIGN ANYWHERE OF LIFE.

WHAT KIND OF **MEANING** CAN WE EVER HOPE TO FIND ?

TOWARD WHAT END DOES MAN VENTURE FORTH INTO AN ETERNAL NIGHT OF DEATH?

ENOUGH OF YOUR CRYING, KID! HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHO **GOT** YOU TO THE MOON IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WE FIGURE A METEORITE AT LEAST TWO BILLION YEARS AGO CAUSED THIS IMPACT CRATER. IT'S A DEEP ONE.

EVEN SO, IF IT WERE ON EARTH, WEATHERING WOULD HAVE WIPED OUT EVERY TRACE BY NOW.

WHAT WE CALL "SEAS" ON THE MOON WERE ONCE VAST FIELDS OF LAVA, ALTHOUGH OUR TRIAL DIGGING HAS PICKED UP A SMALL AMOUNT OF PRECIOUS ORE...

[illegible] NT INTO, ISN'T IT?

[illegible]

I AM SINKING INTO THE BOTTOM OF A DEEP BLUE SEA..

...EVEN THOUGH I'VE FINALLY COME TO THE MOON.

THIS CAVE WAS PROBABLY FORMED WHEN A GAS BUBBLE GOT TRAPPED AS THE LAVA SEA SOLIDIFIED

OH, KID WERE NOT GETTING ANY CLOSER, ARE WE

OF COURSE, THE GAS ESCAPED LONG AGO, BUT THE METEORITE HAPPENED TO CRASH INTO THE SPACE THAT REMAINED

WE FOUND QUITE A FEW METEORITE FRAGMENTS

LAST TRIP, WE SEARCHED FOR PETE IN THIS AREA. LETS GO TO THE MORE NARROW SIDE THIS TIME.

A GEIGER COUNTER! MUST BE PETE'S!

AND LOOK--IT'S OFF THE SCALE!

RADIOACTIVITY?

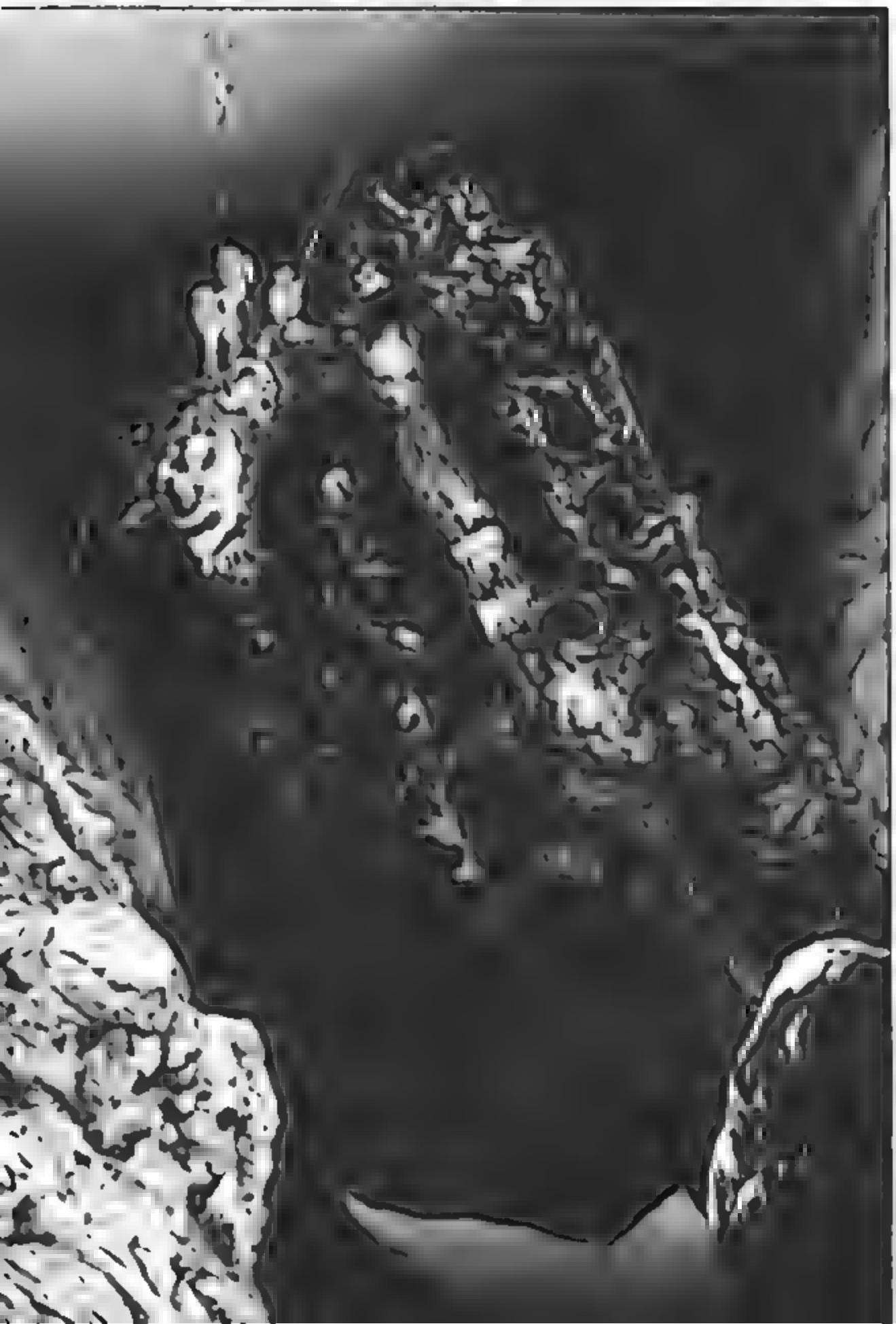
GET ANOTHER READING! HURRY!

IT'S STRONG, ALL RIGHT! I CAN'T GET AN EXACT COUNT, BUT THERE MUST BE A RADIOACTIVE DEPOSIT SOMEWHERE CLOSE BY.

PETE MUST HAVE LEFT HIS METER TO MARK THE F.ND...

URANIUM?!

IT'S WORTH INVESTIGATING. CHARLIE, BRIAN-- YOU STAY HERE WE'LL KEEP GOING DOWN.



YES, WE FOUND IF THE METEORITE BROKE INTO THE GAS-FILLED CAVERN, THE HIGH-PRESSURE GAS ESCAPING COULD HAVE CUSHIONED THE BLOW.

THE METEORITE, ITS SPEED THUS REDUCED, COULD BE LEFT ALMOST UNDAMAGED

IT'S... IT'S ALMOST A MIRACLE COULD A METEORITE FROM TWO BILLION YEARS AGO STILL BE INTACT?

LOOK HERE! PETE NOTICED THE METEORITE AND DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE HE GOT TOO ABSORBED AND FELL--

DAMN! THE LIGHT WON'T REACH!

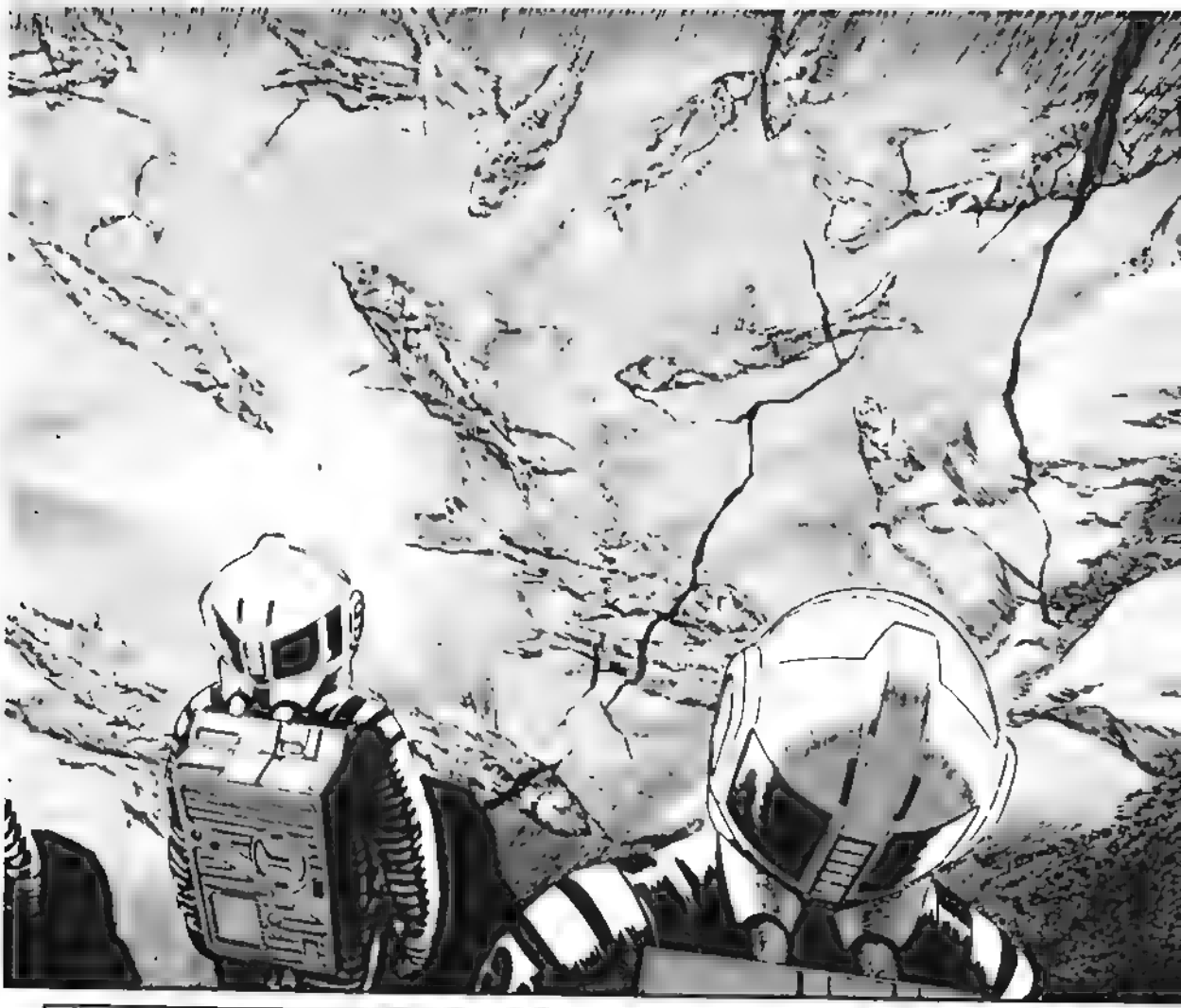
GET LIGHTS TOGETHER! HURRY UP!

IT'S THE BACK OF THE METEORITE! A LAYER'S BEEN EXPOSED-- THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING...

AH..!

MY GOD!

HE'D SAW THIS AT HIS LAST—
HE SAW THIS!



I AM SINKING INTO THE BOTTOM OF A DEEP BLUE SEA..
SINKING IN AN OCEAN FULL OF LIVES, TWINKLING.

A LARGE URANIUM DEPOSIT WAS FOUND BENEATH THE MOON'S SURFACE.

AFTER HEARING THE NEWS, PEOPLE WILL RUSH HERE TO SEEK EVEN MORE PROMISING RESOURCES. FIRST TO THE MOON.. THEN INTO SPACE...

I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE FOSSILIZED SCHOOL OF FISH CAME FROM, NOR WHAT IT MEANS..

LIFE, I SUPPOSE, FROM THE SEA OF SOME DISTANT PLANET.. IN SOME DISTANT PAST...

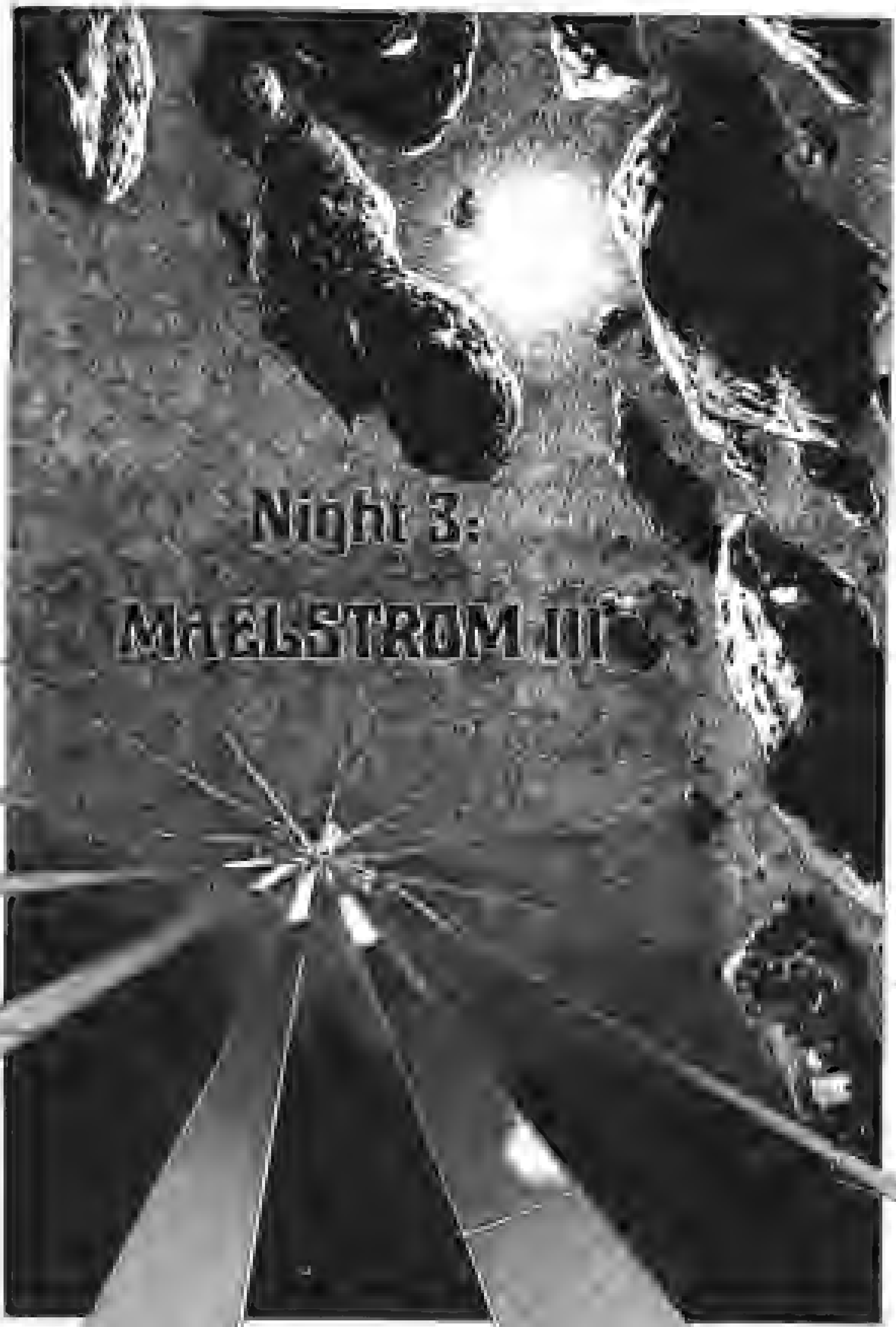
NOW I JUST LET MYSELF CRY.. FOR MY BROTHER'S HEART WHEN HE FOUND THE FOSSIL...

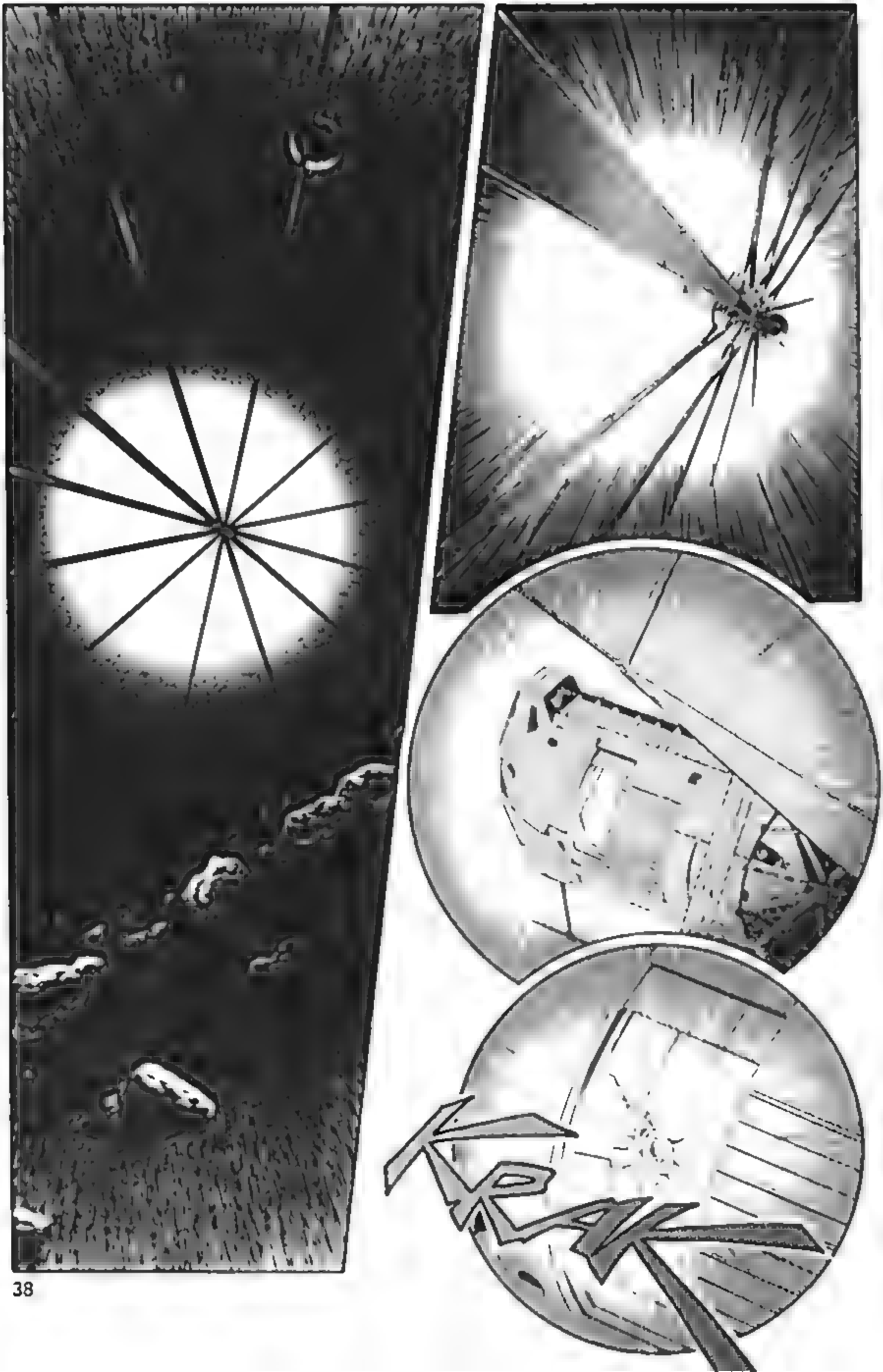
..AND FOR MY OWN HEART, WHICH HAS BEEN FROZEN.

IS THE UNIVERSE FILLED WITH LIVES ?

IS THIS EMPTY SPACE WE SEEK TO CONQUER TRULY A SEA OF FERTILITY ?

Night 2: fin

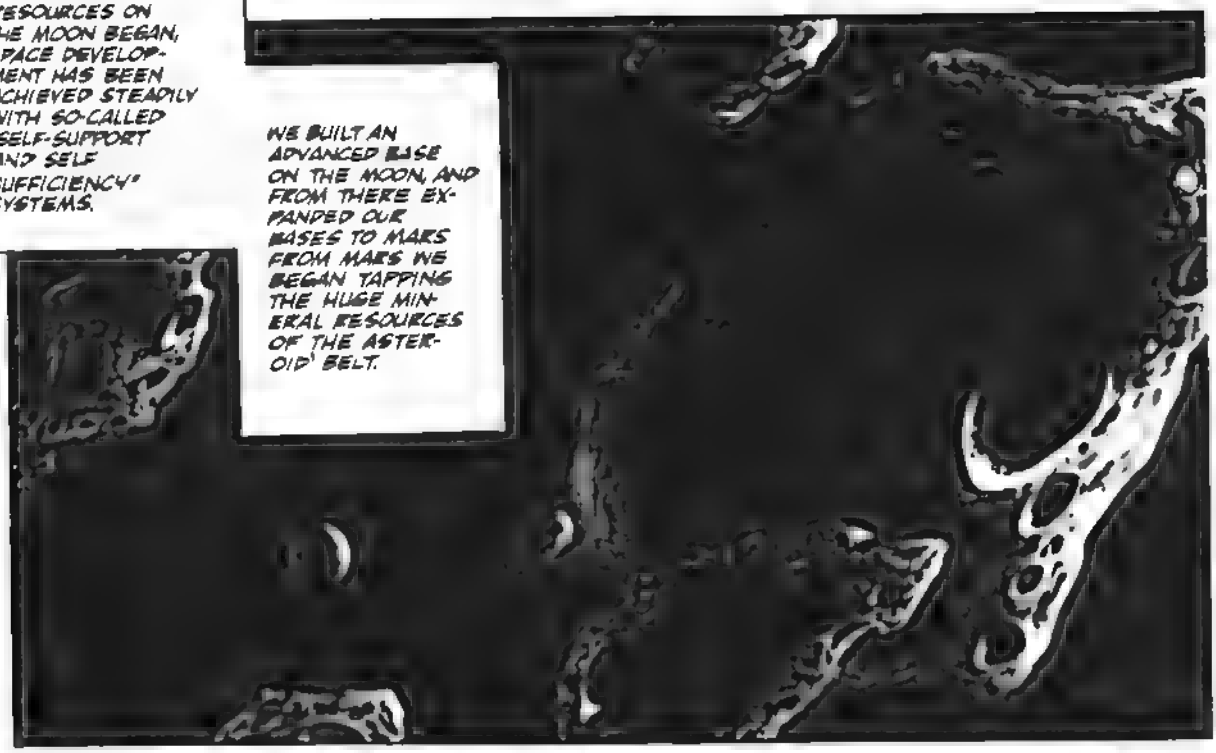

Night 3:
MAELSTROM III


KRAK

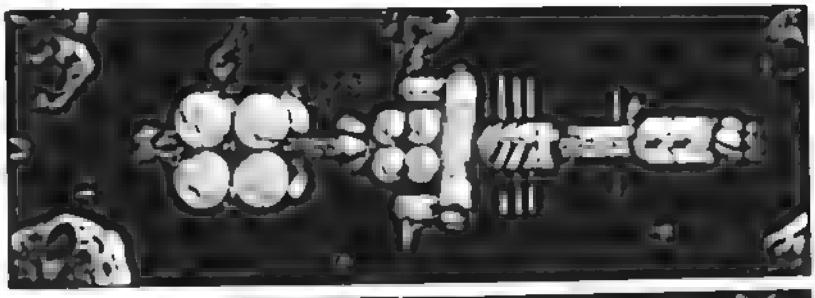
WHAT ?! DAVE ?!
DAVE ?!

SINCE THE EXPLOITATION OF USEFUL MINERAL RESOURCES ON THE MOON BEGAN, SPACE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED STEADILY WITH SO-CALLED "SELF-SUPPORT AND SELF SUFFICIENCY" SYSTEMS.

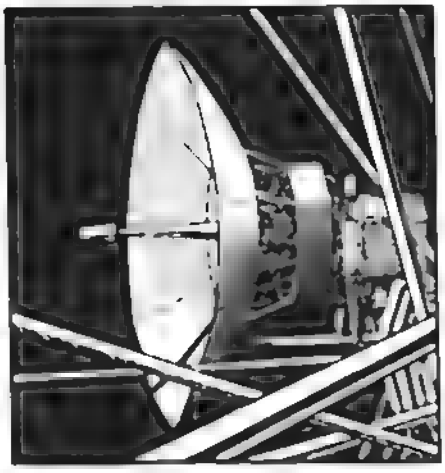
WE BUILT AN ADVANCED BASE ON THE MOON, AND FROM THERE EXPANDED OUR BASES TO MARS FROM MARS WE BEGAN TAPPING THE HUGE MINERAL RESOURCES OF THE ASTEROID BELT.



THE MASS OF THE ASTEROIDS COMBINED IS ONE THOUSANDTH OF THE EARTH—BUT THEY ARE JUST FLOATING IN SPACE, EASY PICKINGS FOR MINERS.

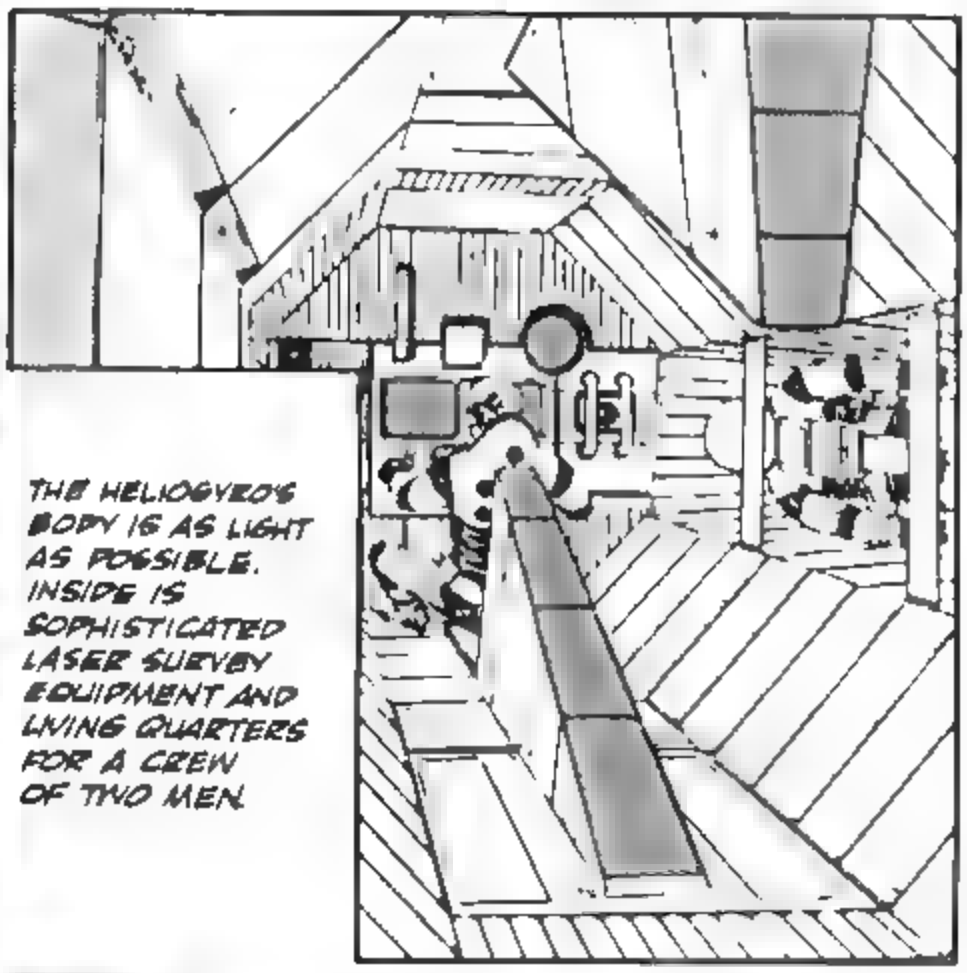


WE BEGAN WITH A FULL INVESTIGATION OF MINERAL DISTRIBUTION, SCANNING EACH ASTEROID AND NOTING ITS COMPOSITION.



THE HUGE NUMBERS OF ASTEROIDS APPEAR TO BE TRACES OF A CRASH BETWEEN TWO CELESTIAL BODIES BILLIONS OF YEARS AGO. THE ASTEROIDS, MAINLY SCATTERED BETWEEN JUPITER AND MARS, MEASURE FROM A FEW METERS TO HUNDREDS OF KILOMETERS IN DIAMETER

THE MAIN INSTRUMENT OF THE ASTEROID SCANNING MISSION EPITOMIZES "SELF-SUPPORT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY." THE HELIOGYRO, LIKE A HUGE SPACE WINDMILL, REQUIRES NEITHER ROCKET PROPULSION NOR FUEL



THE HELIOGYRO'S BODY IS AS LIGHT AS POSSIBLE. INSIDE IS SOPHISTICATED LASER SURVEY EQUIPMENT AND LIVING QUARTERS FOR A CREW OF TWO MEN.

DAVE AND I WERE SPLITTING DAY AND NIGHT SHIFTS, SCANNING THE BELT WITH OUR HELIOGYRO **CLARA**-- UNTIL JUST A MINUTE AGO

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A TINY ASTEROID THE SIZE OF A GRAIN OF SAND.

WE JUST GOT TOO CLOSE. WE FLY WITH A SPEED OF A FEW THOUSAND KILOMETERS PER HOUR. THE HELIOGYRO IS OF SUCH LIGHT CONSTRUCTION THAT THERE IS NO WAY TO SURVIVE A HIT.

THE TINY ASTEROID SLICED THROUGH THE RESIDENTIAL SECTION AS IF IT WAS BUTTER, TAKING THE AIR, SOME EQUIPMENT, AND MY PARTNER WITH IT

I WAS LUCKY I HAD JUST FINISHED MY SHIFT AND HEADED OFF TO SLEEP.

WHEN I REST, I ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET AND PROTECT MYSELF IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. THE P.O.S. WORKS AUTOMATICALLY-- THAT SAVED MY LIFE

BUT REALLY--

--CAN I CALL MY CURRENT PREDICAMENT "GOOD LUCK"?

THIS IS **MOTHER.** WE'VE GOTTEN NO RESPONSE FROM THE THIRD GYRO, **CLARA.** RESPOND, SHUTTLE.

ROGER! SHE SEEMS TO BE ACCELERATING AS SHE MOVES AWAY. EVEN AT FULL SPEED, IT WILL TAKE TEN HOURS TO CAPTURE THE GYRO.

IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, IT WILL TAKE TEN HOURS FOR THE SHUTTLE TO INTERCEPT ME.

WITH THE SPARE OXYGEN TANKS GONE, ONLY MY P.O.S. AND THIS TANK ON MY BACK ARE LEFT.

I'VE ONLY GOT **SEVEN HOURS.**

COMMUNICATION ANTENNAS ARE ENTIRELY DESTROYED BLADE-PITCH ADJUSTMENT IS OUT OF ORDER POSITION CONTROL SYSTEM IS NONFUNCTIONAL.

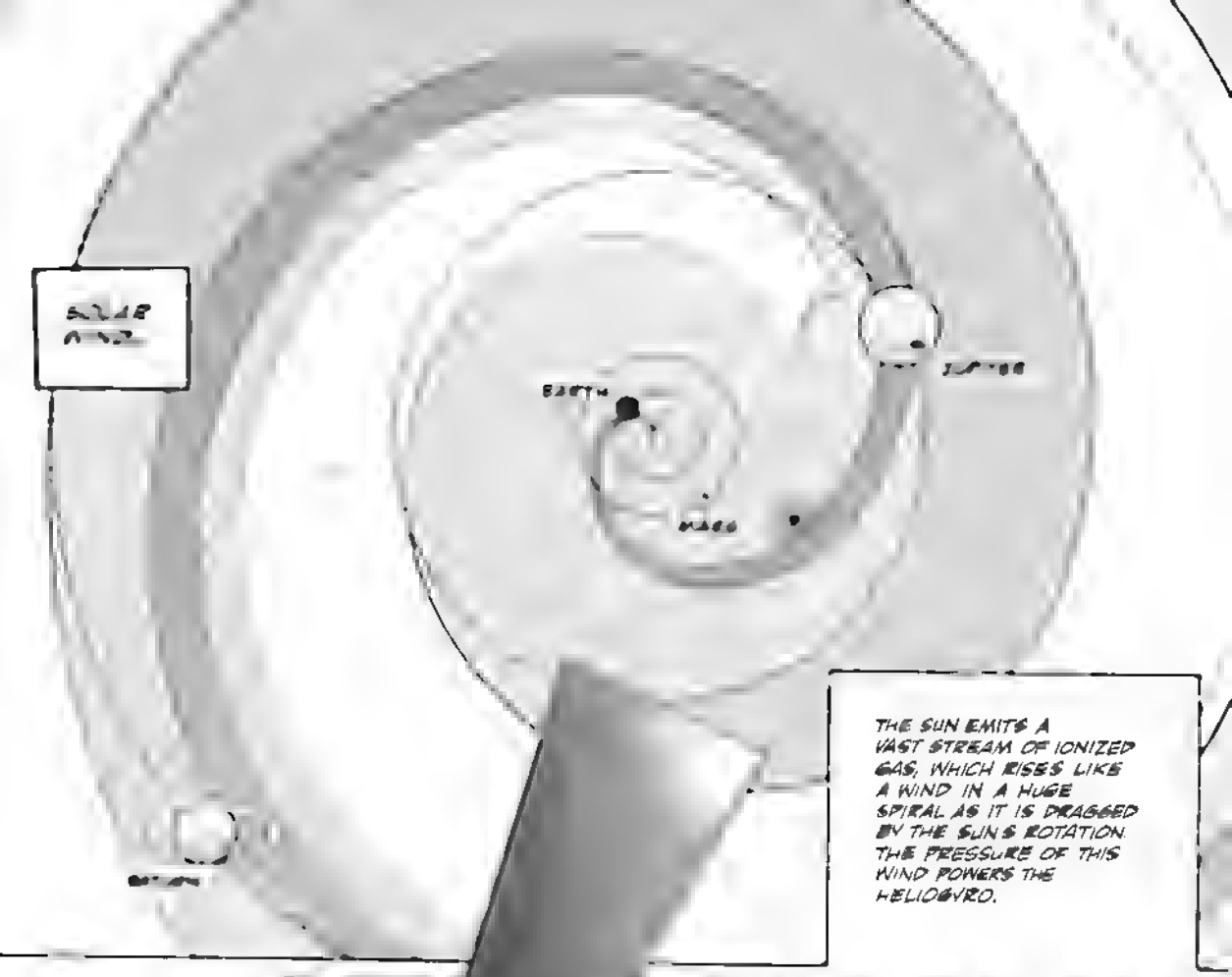
THE COMPRESSED GAS PRESSURE FOR EMERGENCY EXIT IS DOWN THE SOLAR PANEL POWER IS AT TWENTY PERCENT.

I'M LIKE A KITE WHOSE STRING IS CUT OFF.

WITHOUT CONTROL, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO REDUCE THE SPEED OR TO REBOUND. I CAN'T EVEN USE THE EMERGENCY SYSTEM TO CUT OFF THE BLADES FROM THE RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS.

BUM

AND IN THE MEANTIME, THIS GYRO CONTINUES TO ACCELERATE ENORMOUSLY. WE'VE LOST THE WEIGHT OF SO MUCH EQUIPMENT-- AND DAVE...


SOLAR WIND
EARTH
JUPITER
MARS
THE SUN EMITS A VAST STREAM OF IONIZED GAS, WHICH RISES LIKE A WIND IN A HUGE SPIRAL AS IT IS DRAGGED BY THE SUN'S ROTATION. THE PRESSURE OF THIS WIND POWERS THE HELIOGYRO.

EACH OF THE HELIOGYRO'S TWELVE BLADES IS A HUGE "SAIL" TEN K.LOMETERS LONG
THIS NEVERENDING WIND FROM THE SUN IS READY TO PUSH THE HELIOGYRO OUT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

EARTH. THE BIRTHPLACE OF HUMANKIND... IS 330 MILLION KILOMETERS FROM HERE. JUST ANOTHER POT IN THE SKY GETTING FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY.

DAD, YOU KNOW WHAT ?

YOU KNOW THAT THE MOON'S GRAVITY IS ONE SIXTH OF EARTH'S, SO IT MAKES IT EASIER FOR THE HEART TO WORK?

SINCE I WAS BORN *HERE*, I MAY LIVE LONGER THAN EARTHANS. 150 YEARS OR 200 MAYBE

IF YOU WANT TO BE AN ASTRONAUT, IT'S BETTER TO LIVE LONGER, ISN'T IT?

WHEN I GET MARRIED, I WANT TO HAVE A BABY AT *MARS*...

OH, OLYMPIA IF ONLY I COULD TALK TO YOU ONE LAST TIME.

. YOU WERE MY PROOF THAT HUMAN BEINGS HAD FINALLY BEGUN TO EVOLVE IN SPACE ..

BUT YOU'LL MANAGE ALL RIGHT WITHOUT ME, THIS SILLY OLD *EARTHAN*...

HMM..NOW MY EX-WIFE! I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO **YOU!** ONE MORE CALCULATION.

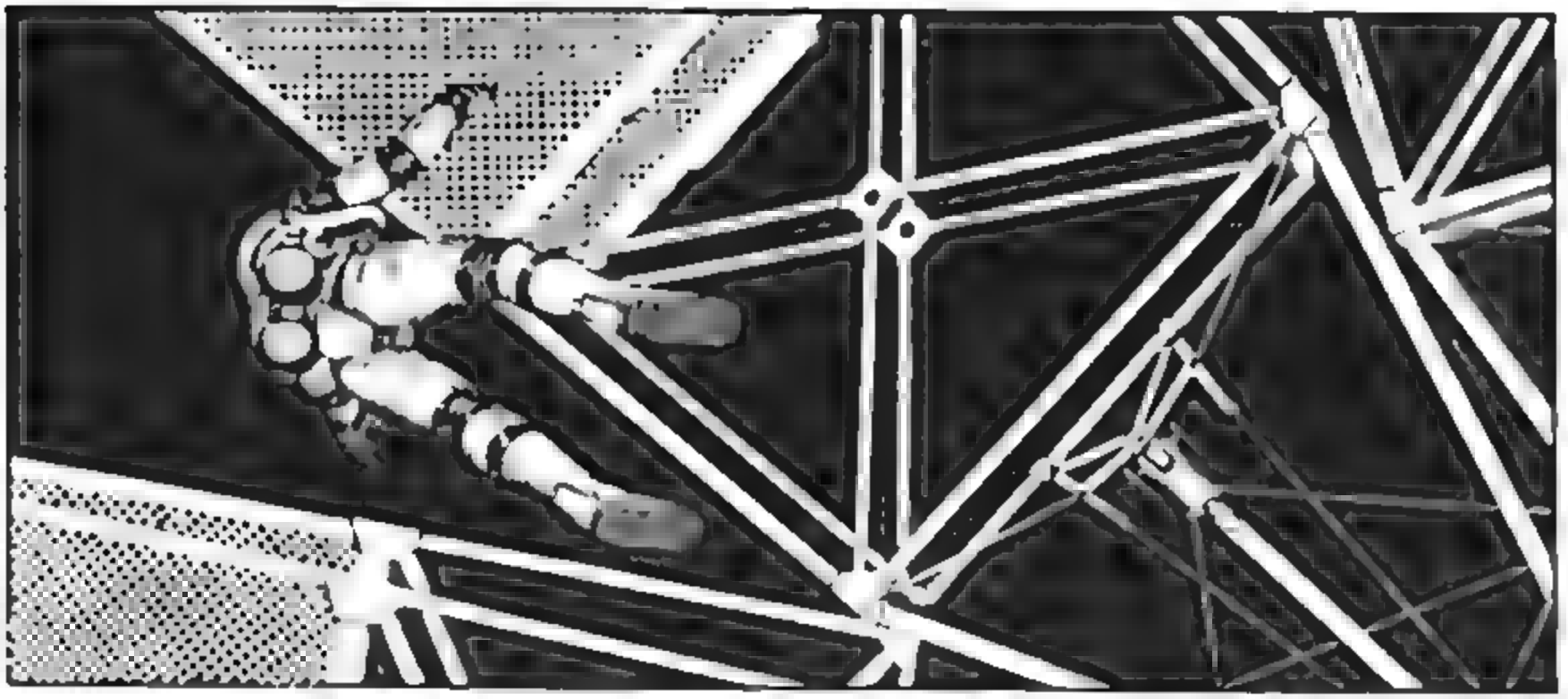
THE ESTIMATED COURSE OF THE RESCUE SHUTTLE...

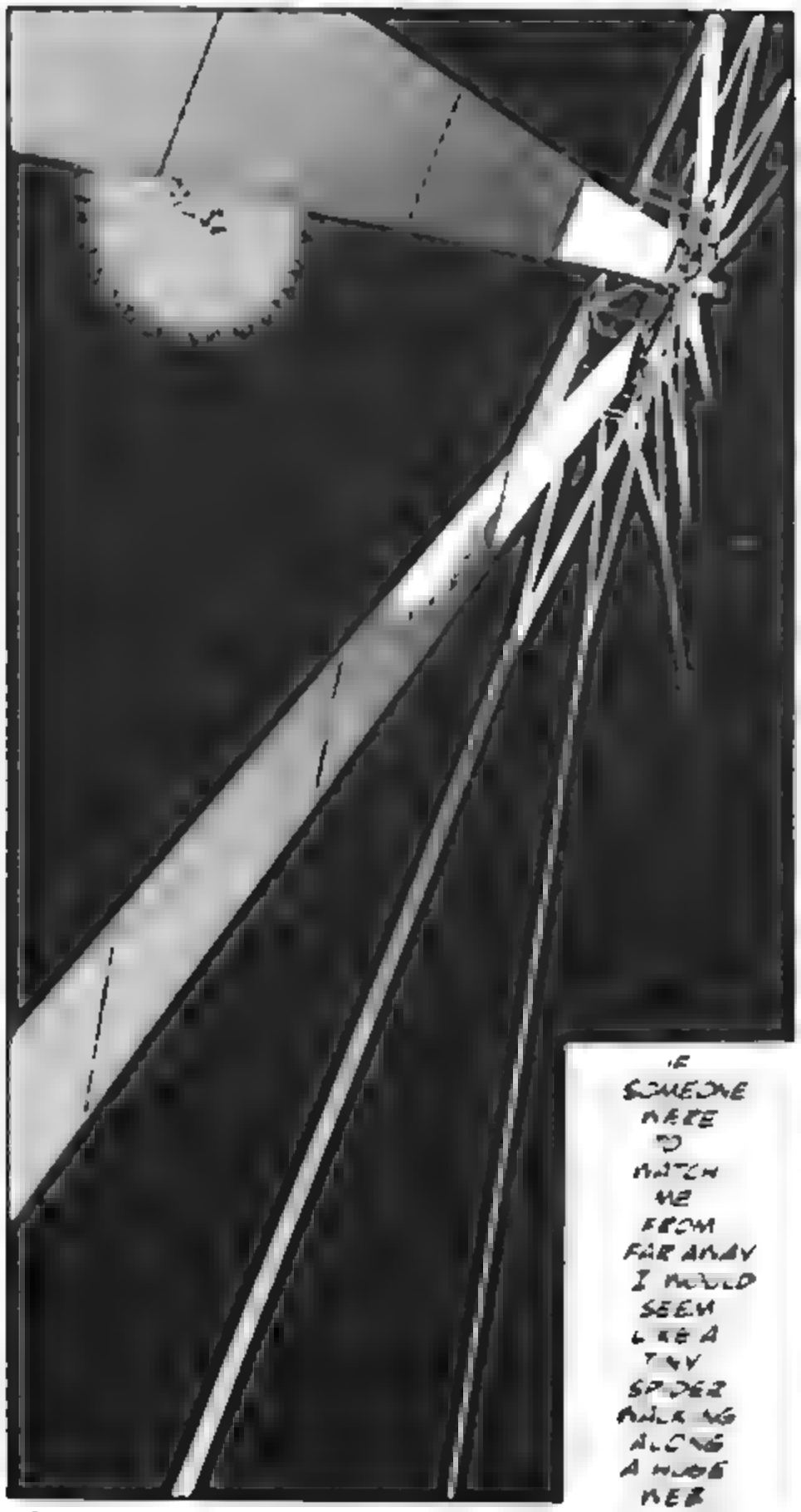
AND THEN FIGURE IN THE BLADE'S ANGLE OF GYRATION WITH RESPECT TO THE SHUTTLE'S COURSE AND—AS I THOUGHT! THE MAXIMAL FORCE VECTOR **DOES** POINT TOWARD THE SHUTTLE, TOWARD THE **SUN.**

EVEN IF I MANAGE TO ESCAPE THE HELIOGYRO, MY INERTIA IS ONLY GOING TO KEEP ME ON THE SAME COURSE AND SPEED--

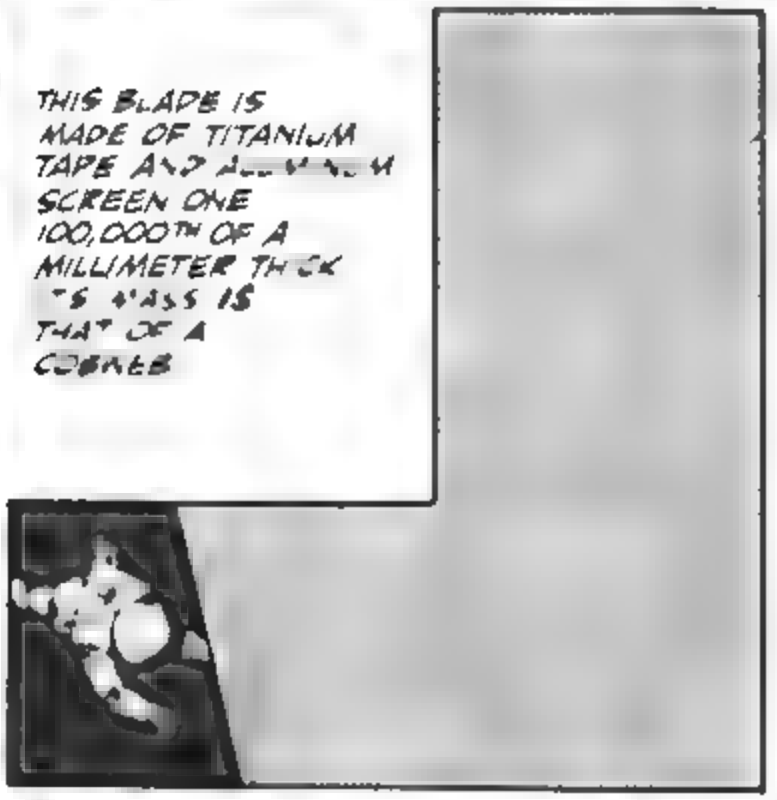
--I'LL RUN OUT OF OXYGEN BEFORE THEY REACH ME. I MUST FIND THE WAY TO GET CLOSER TO THE SHUTTLE.

AN EMERGENCY WAVE TRANSMITTER-- A LAST RESORT

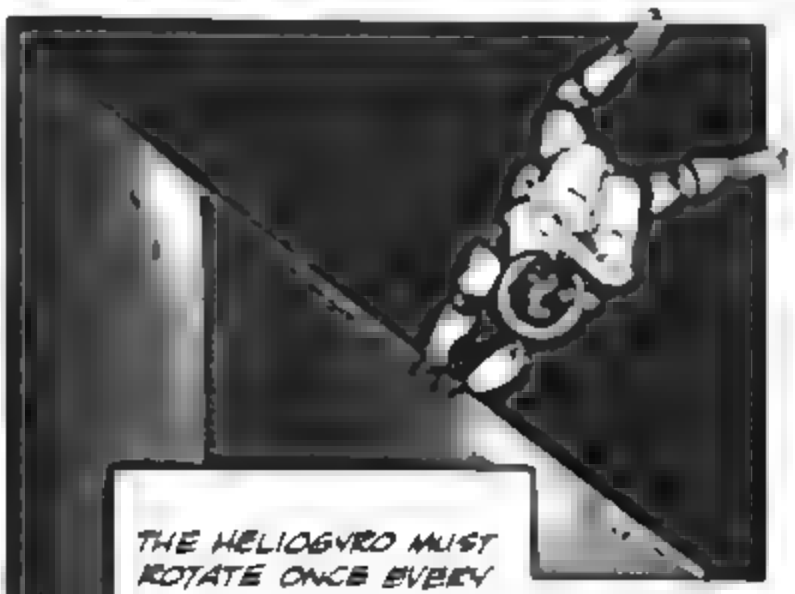




THIS BLADE IS MADE OF TITANIUM TAPE AND ALUMINUM SCREEN ONE 100,000TH OF A MILLIMETER THICK ITS MASS IS THAT OF A COMET



IF SOMEONE HERE TO MATCH ME FROM FAR AWAY I WOULD SEEM LIKE A TINY SPIDER WALKING ALONG A HUGE WEB



THE HELIOGYRO MUST ROTATE ONCE EVERY THREE MINUTES TO CREATE THE CENTRIFUGAL FORCE NECESSARY TO EXTEND AND SUPPORT THESE TWELVE BLADES, EACH TEN KILOMETERS LONG. I, TOO, AM CARRIED TO THE OUTSIDE BY THIS FORCE...

JUPITER.

ON THE PLANET, THERE IS A HUGE HURRICANE [illegible]

SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE THERE MAY [illegible] MEN WILL FIGHT WITH IT

BUT NOW I HAVE TO MOVE AGAINST THE MAELSTROM OF THE SOLAR WIND, GREATER BY FAR THAN JUPITER'S PITIFUL STORM.

AND I MUST DO IT WITH MAN-MADE ROTARY MOTION

AS I REACH THE SAIL'S TIP, THE ENORMOUS CENTRIPETAL FORCE MAKES ME FEEL FAINT

[illegible]

NOW!
THE TWELVE BLADES, WHICH ROTATE [illegible] THREE MINUTES, DRAW A CIRCLE OF TEN KILOMETER [illegible]
[illegible] MAXIMUM-- 1200 KILOMETERS PER HOUR-- AT THE CIRCUMFERENCE. MACH ONE ON EARTH!
I MUST RELEASE AT THE EXACT MOMENT THIS BLADE FACES THE SUN...

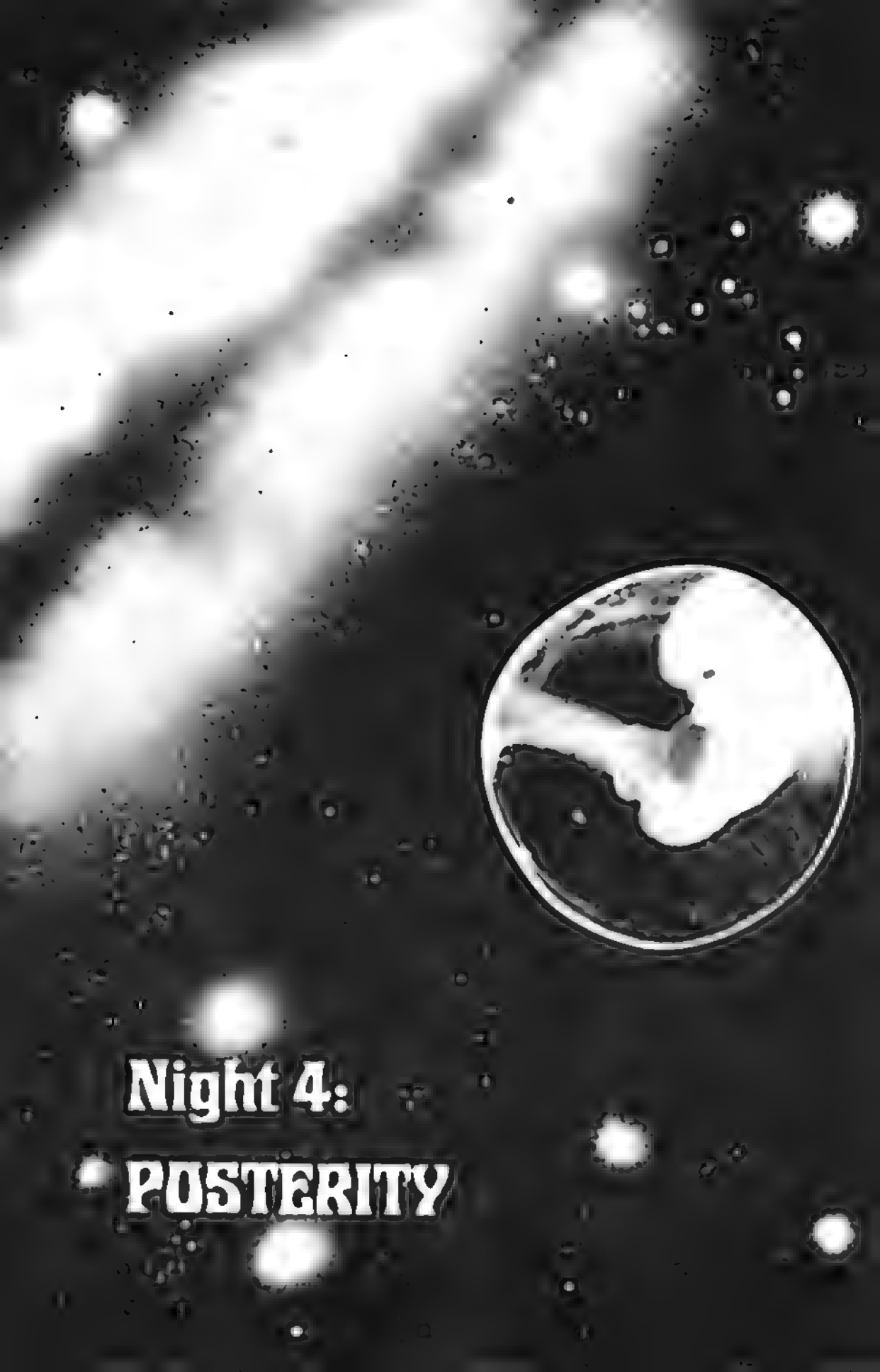
OLYMPIA, MY DAUGHTER I NAME? YOU AFTER THE GREAT VOLCANO OF MARS.

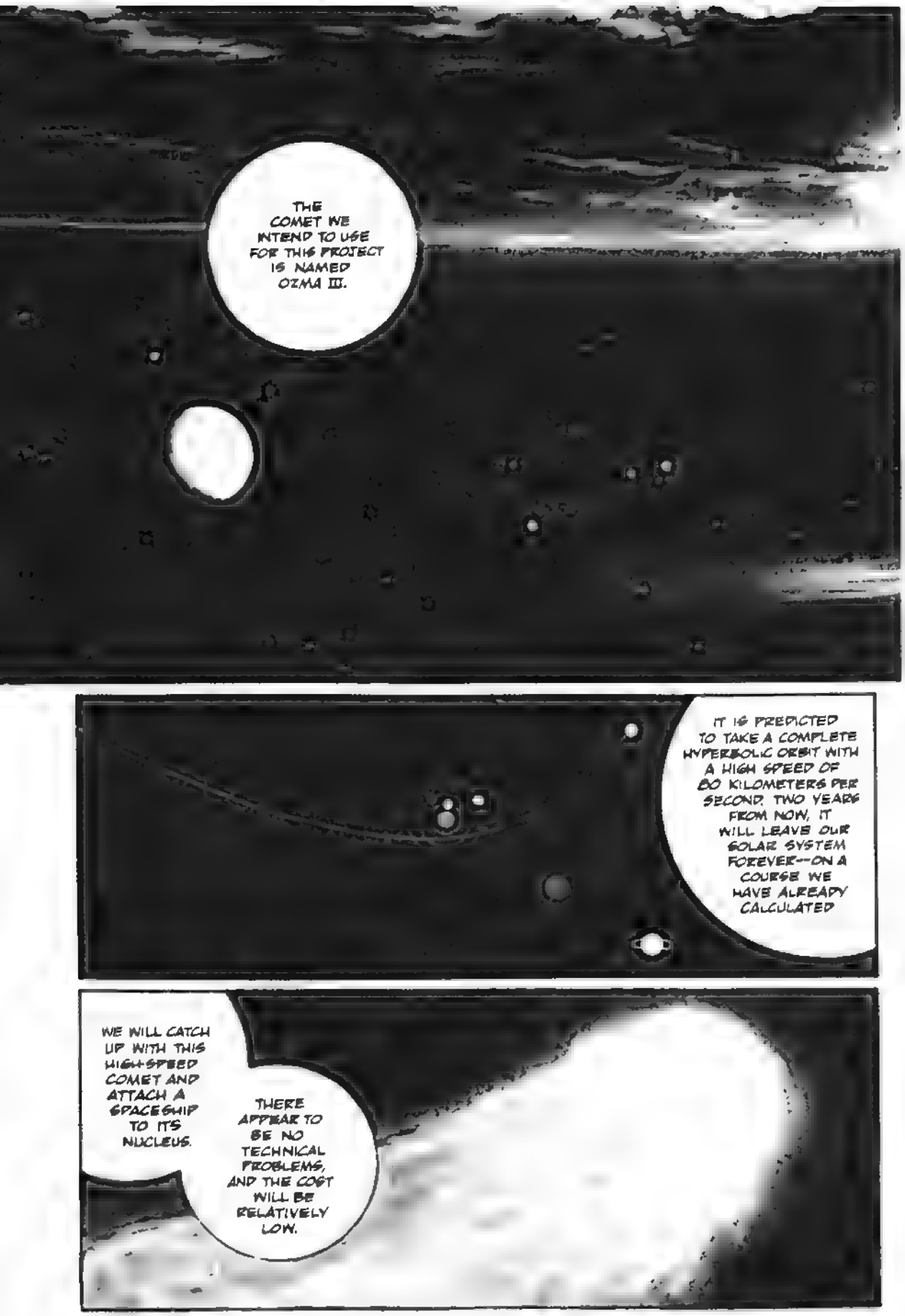
FOR A DAY WHEN YOU A MOONAN, AT LAST BECOME A MARSAN.

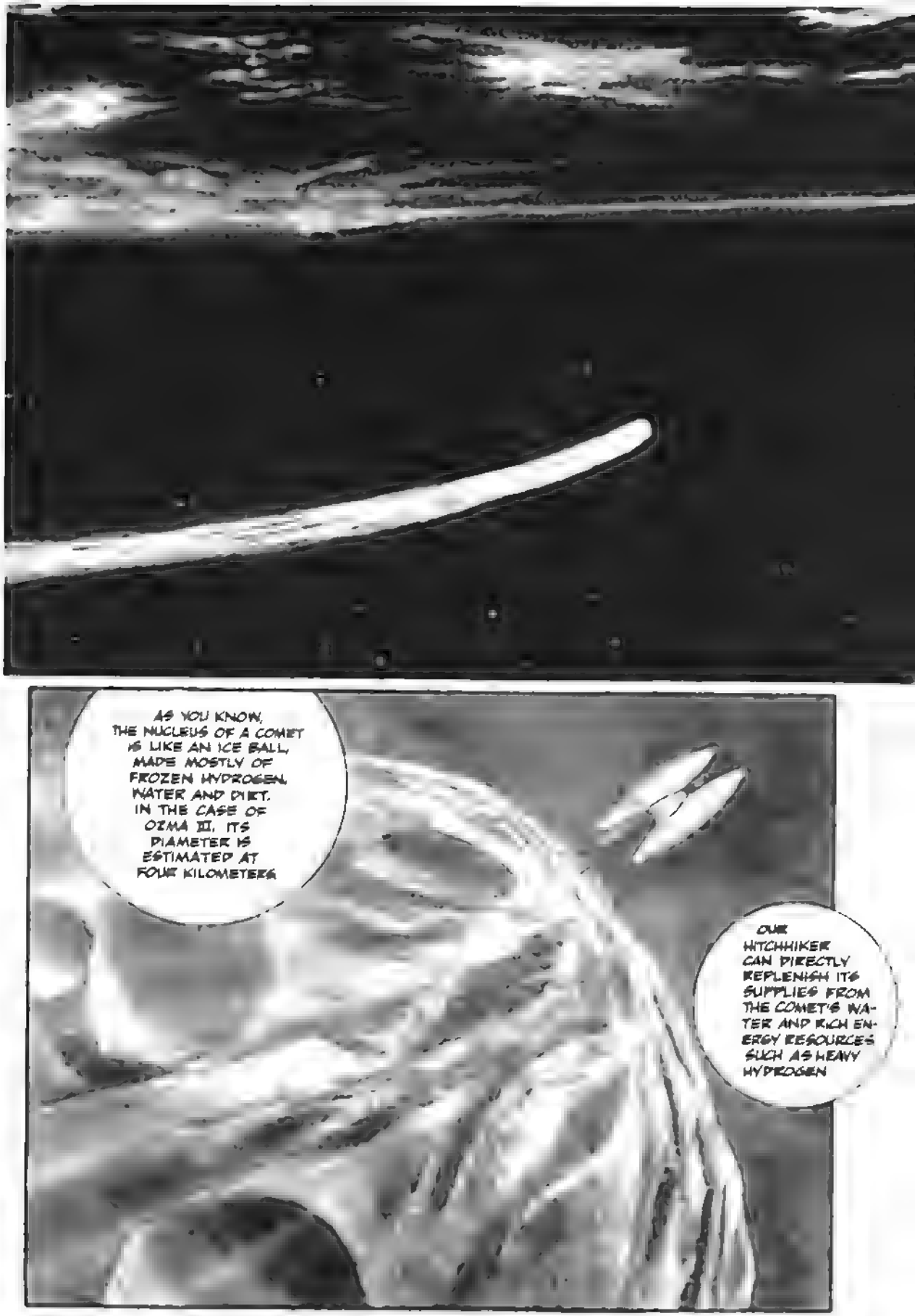
BUT IT'S STILL TOO EARLY TO GIVE UP ON EARTHANS...

...I'M FRANK C. BOEMAN, AN ASTRONAUT, AN EARTHAN WHO RIDES THE MAELSTROM OF SOLAR WIND...

Night 3: fin

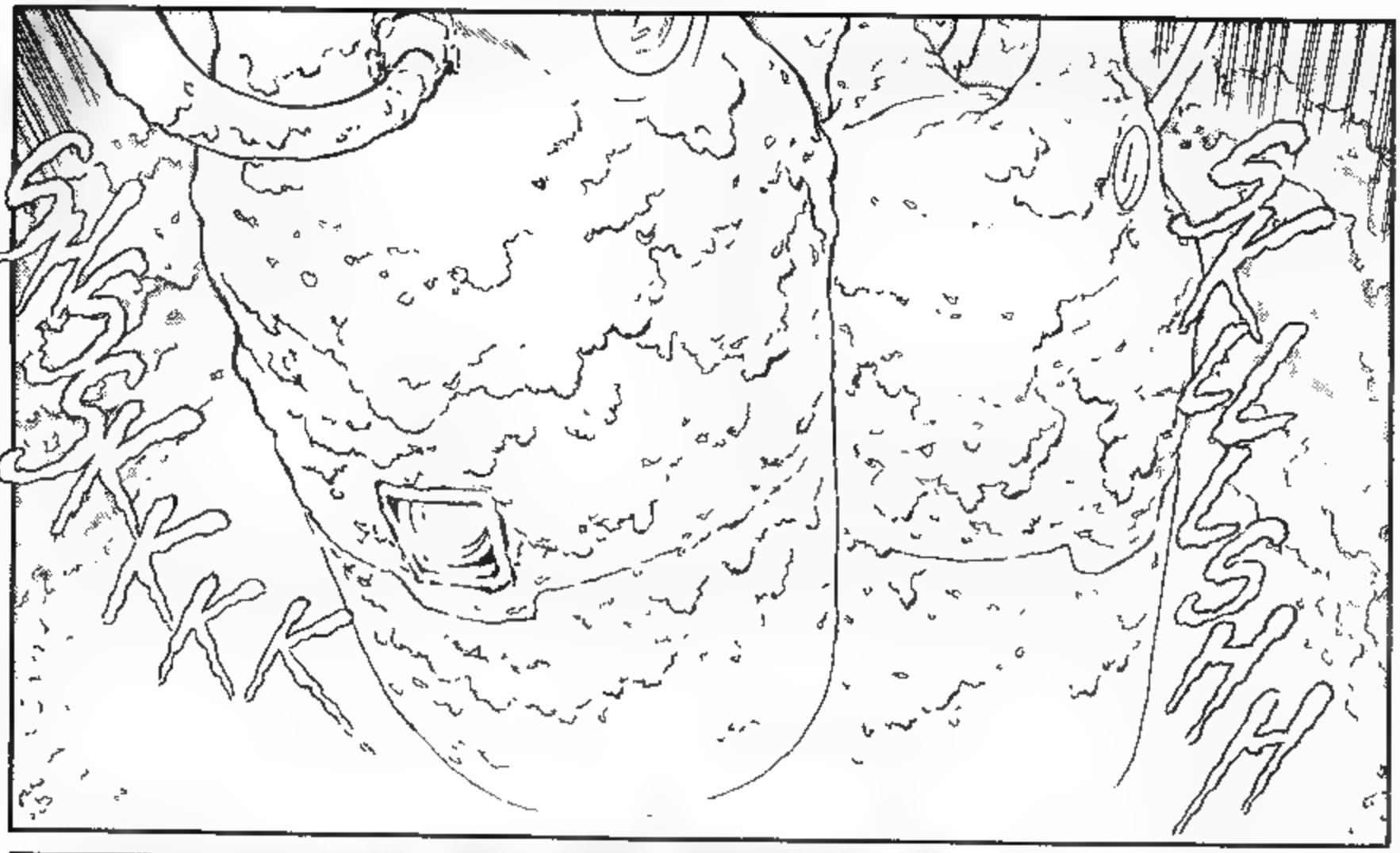

Night 4:
POSTERITY

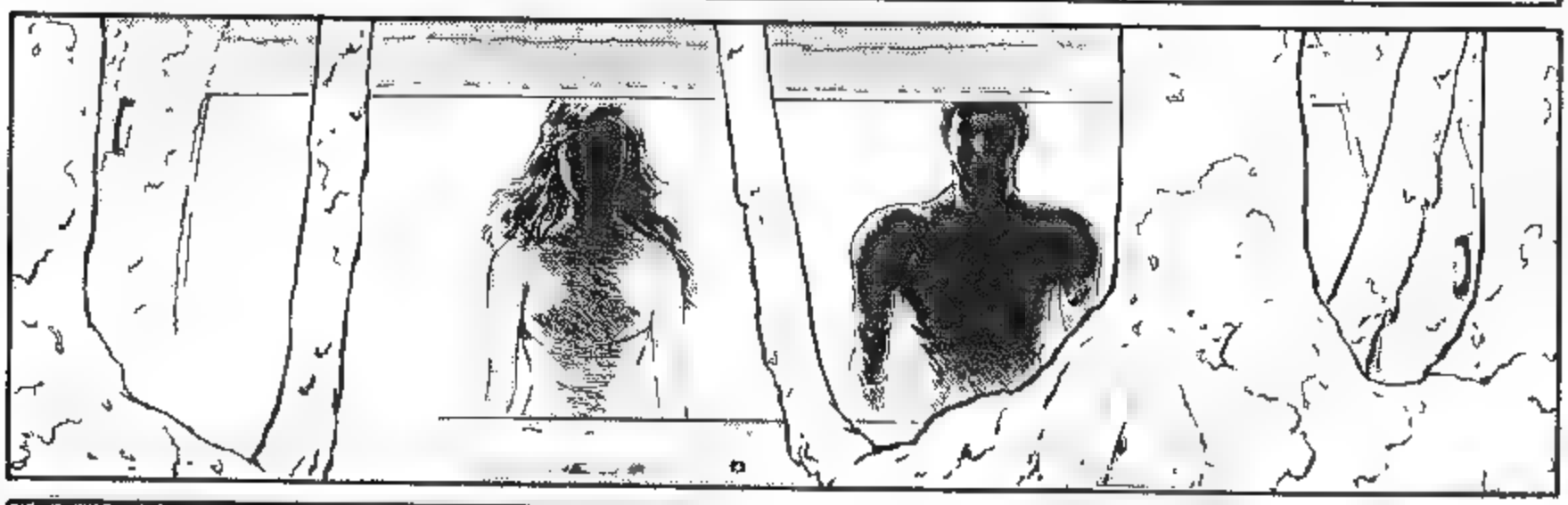

THE COMET WE INTEND TO USE FOR THIS PROJECT IS NAMED OZMA III.
IT IS PREDICTED TO TAKE A COMPLETE HYPERBOLIC ORBIT WITH A HIGH SPEED OF 60 KILOMETERS PER SECOND. TWO YEARS FROM NOW, IT WILL LEAVE OUR SOLAR SYSTEM FOREVER--ON A COURSE WE HAVE ALREADY CALCULATED
WE WILL CATCH UP WITH THIS HIGH-SPEED COMET AND ATTACH A SPACESHIP TO ITS NUCLEUS.
THERE APPEAR TO BE NO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS, AND THE COST WILL BE RELATIVELY LOW.

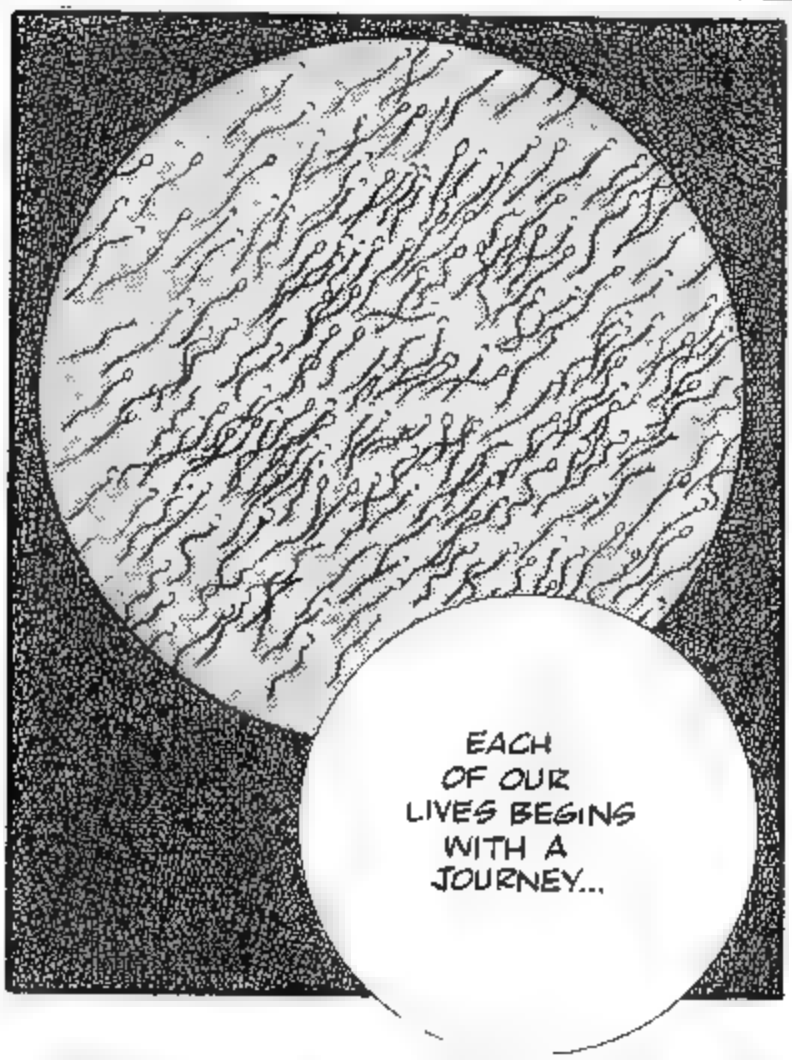

AS YOU KNOW, THE NUCLEUS OF A COMET IS LIKE AN ICE BALL, MADE MOSTLY OF FROZEN HYDROGEN, WATER AND DIRT. IN THE CASE OF OZMA II, ITS DIAMETER IS ESTIMATED AT FOUR KILOMETERS.
OUR HITCHHIKER CAN DIRECTLY REPLENISH ITS SUPPLIES FROM THE COMET'S WATER AND RICH ENERGY RESOURCES SUCH AS HEAVY HYDROGEN

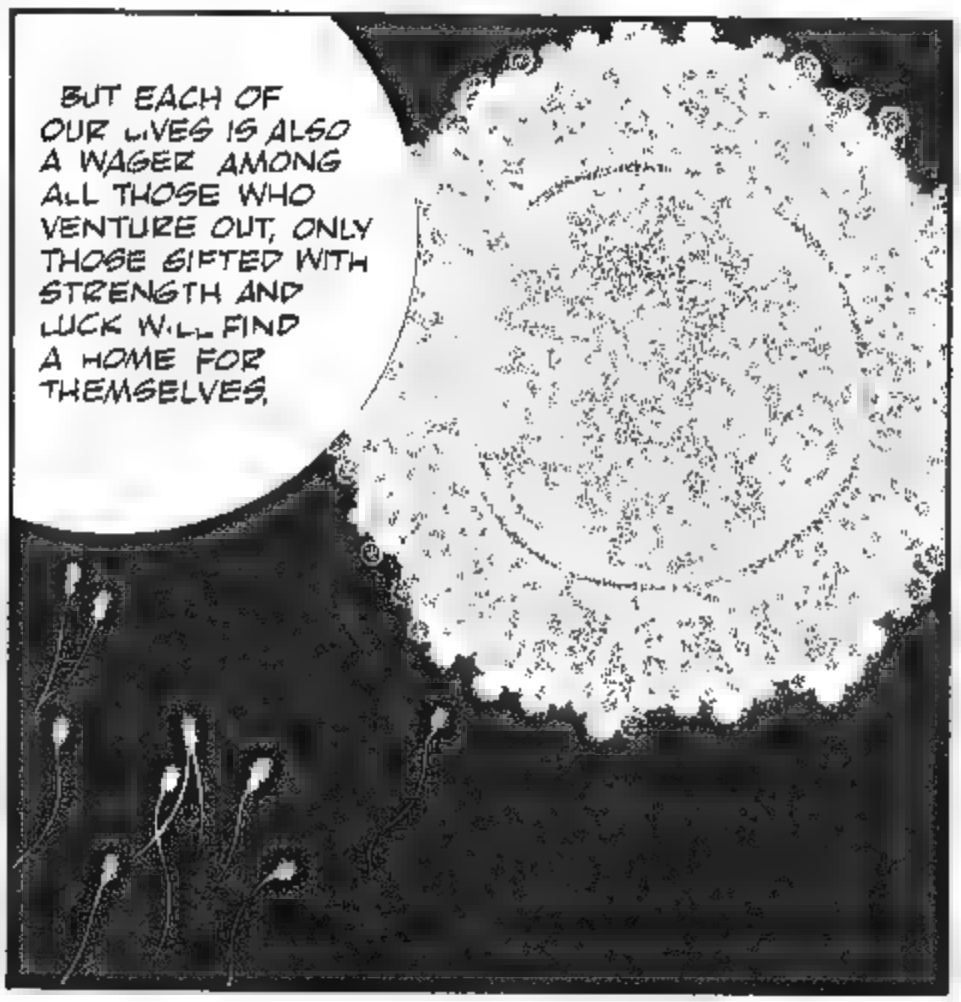
IT WILL BE LIKE UTILIZING THE COMET ITSELF AS A SPACESHIP...

...AS A NATURAL, INTER-SIDEREAL SPACESHIP






EACH OF OUR LIVES BEGINS WITH A JOURNEY...


BUT EACH OF OUR LIVES IS ALSO A WAGER AMONG ALL THOSE WHO VENTURE OUT, ONLY THOSE GIFTED WITH STRENGTH AND LUCK WILL FIND A HOME FOR THEMSELVES.

WE WILL REPEAT THE PROJECT SEVERAL TIMES, ME AND MRS. ROBINSON, IN THE HOPES THAT ONE TRIAL IS SUCCESSFUL.

WE REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION WHAT YOU'VE PROVIDED

..WILL BE COMPLETELY FROZEN WITH LIQUID NITROGEN AND LOADED ON THE SPACESHIP.

EXCUSE ME

...WHAT IF THERE IS NO PLANET AT THE FINAL DESTINATION?

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO...UH, ***THEM***... IF THERE ISN'T A HABITABLE PLANET?

THE SPECIMEN WILL REMAIN NOTHING. THAT'S ALL.

IN SUCH A CASE, THE FREEZING SYSTEM WILL BE SHUT DOWN FOREVER-- ACCORDING TO THE JUDGMENT OF THE COMPUTER.

NOTHING WILL HAPPEN, AND NOTHING WILL BE "BORN."

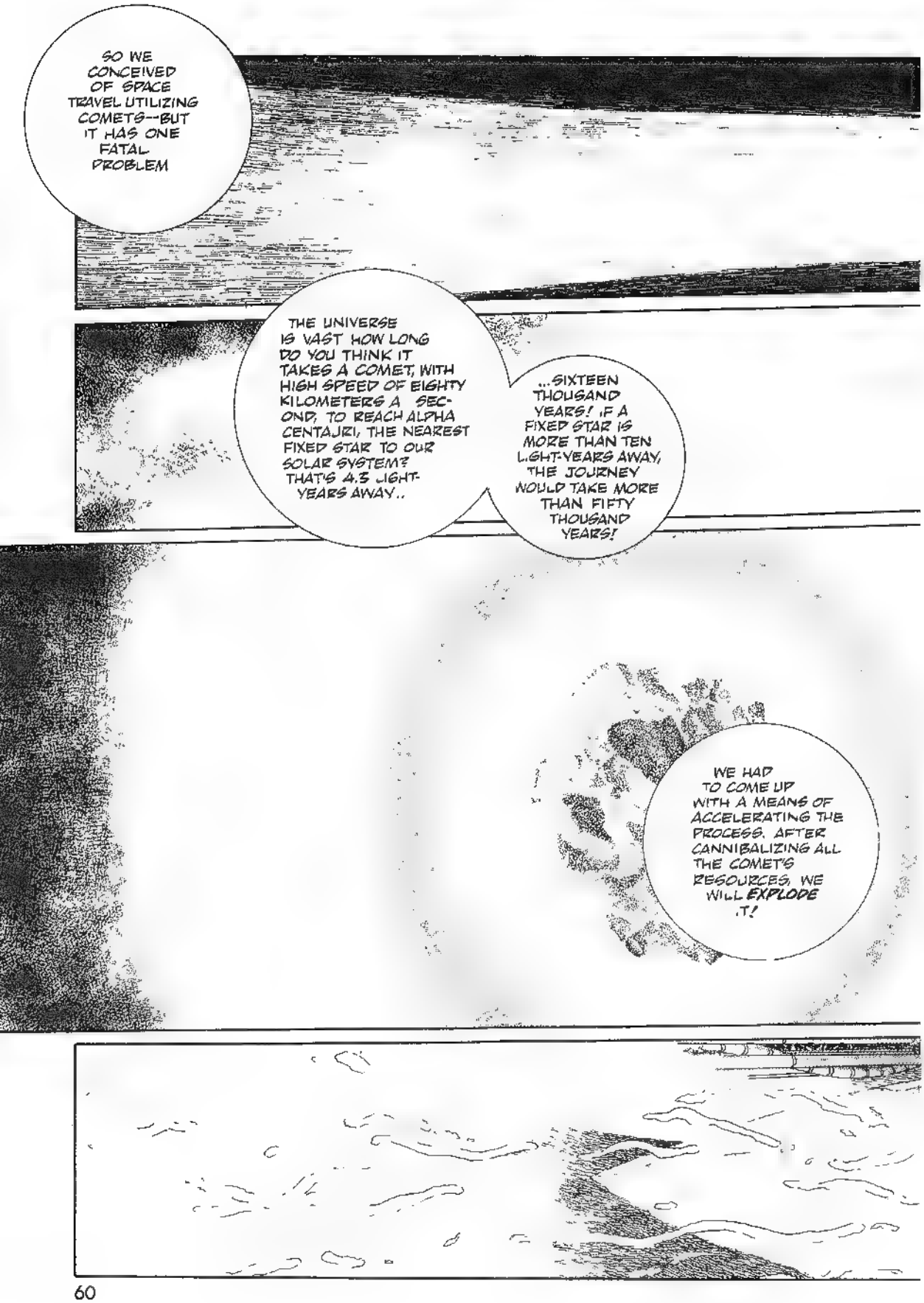
ONLY WHEN AN IDEAL PLANET IS IDENTIFIED IN THE DESTINED SIDEREAL SYSTEM WILL THE FERTILIZATION BE CONDUCTED.

PLEASE DON'T MISUNDERSTAND ME. WE ARE NOT TRYING TO PLAY GOD HERE.

BUT AT THE CURRENT LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY, A MANNED INTER-SIDEREAL SPACE TRIP IS COMPLETELY HOPELESS.

NOT TO MENT ON THE ASTRONOMICAL COST.

FOR JUST SUCH REASONS, EVEN ***UNMANNED*** INTERSIDEREAL EXPEDITIONS HAVE NOT BEEN ATTEMPTED SINCE ***DISCOVERY*** TWENTY YEARS AGO


SO WE CONCEIVED OF SPACE TRAVEL UTILIZING COMETS--BUT IT HAS ONE FATAL PROBLEM
THE UNIVERSE IS VAST HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT TAKES A COMET, WITH HIGH SPEED OF EIGHTY KILOMETERS A SECOND, TO REACH ALPHA CENTAURI, THE NEAREST FIXED STAR TO OUR SOLAR SYSTEM? THAT'S 4.3 LIGHT-YEARS AWAY..
...SIXTEEN THOUSAND YEARS! IF A FIXED STAR IS MORE THAN TEN LIGHT-YEARS AWAY, THE JOURNEY WOULD TAKE MORE THAN FIFTY THOUSAND YEARS!
WE HAD TO COME UP WITH A MEANS OF ACCELERATING THE PROCESS. AFTER CANNIBALIZING ALL THE COMET'S RESOURCES, WE WILL EXPLODE IT!

THEN THE SPACESHIP WILL REACH SPEEDS OF TEN THOUSAND KILOMETERS AN HOUR! IN THIS WAY, WE DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF TIME NECESSARY TO JUST SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS

A NORMAL HUMAN BODY, HOWEVER, COULD NEVER STAND SUCH A RAPID ACCELERATION.

ONLY MACHINES AND COMPLETELY FROZEN OVA AND SPERMATOZOA CAN WITHSTAND IT.

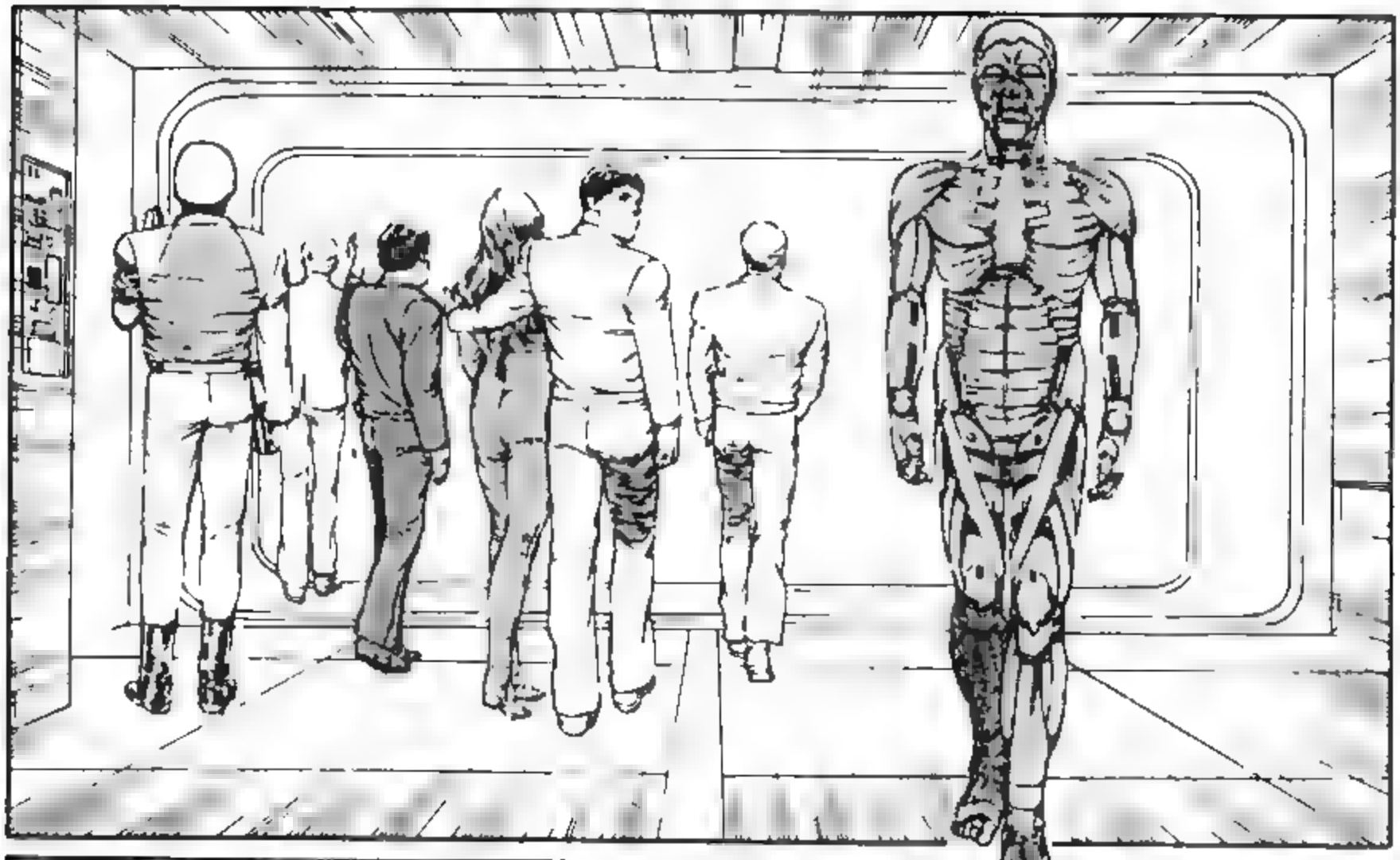
THEY'LL OUR CHILDREN, MANO... IF THEY'RE BORN...

OUR BABIES, FAR AWAY IN THE UNIVERSE ALL BY THEMSELVES

HUSH, ANNE. IT'S TOO LATE...

THIS WAY, PLEASE.

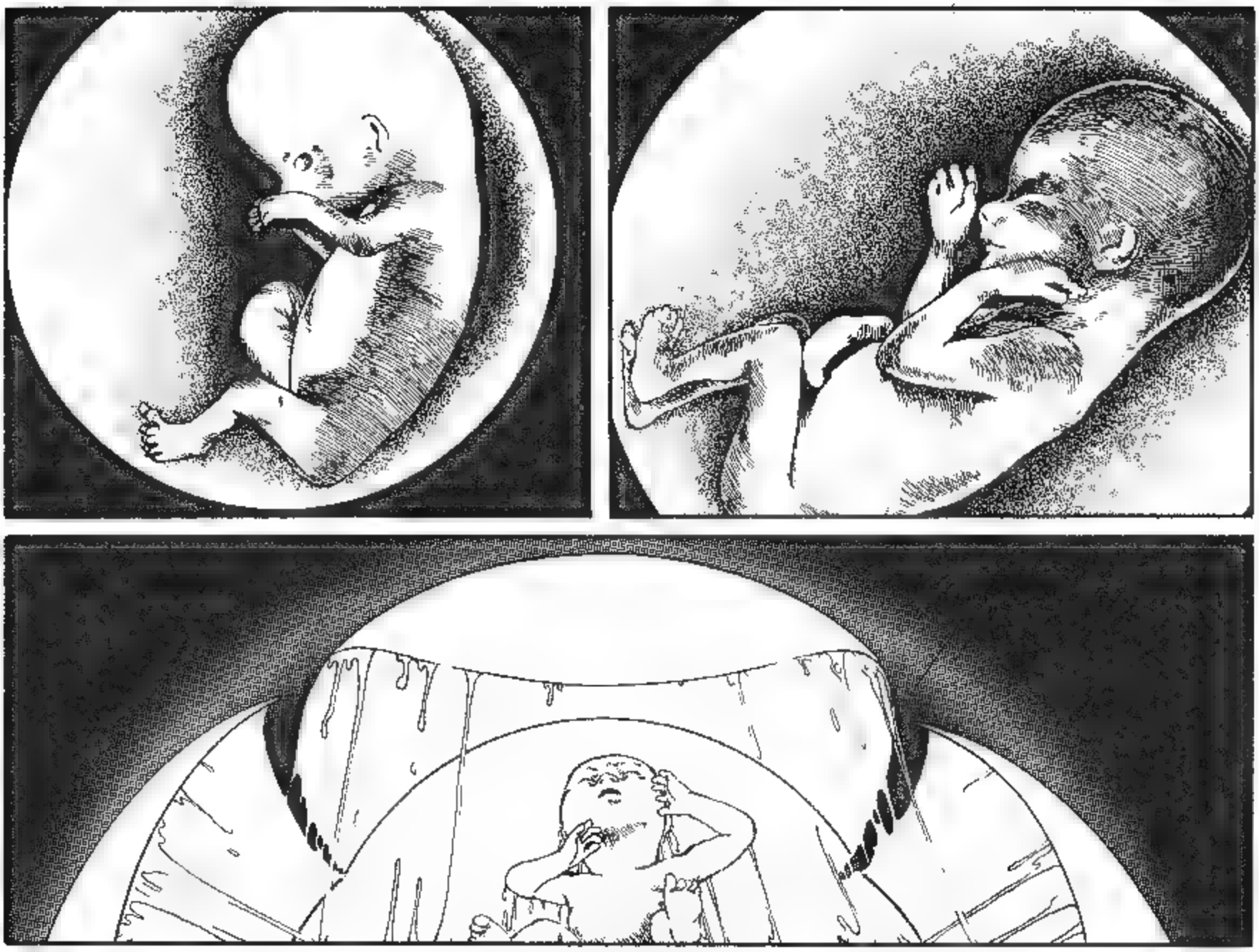
I'LL SHOW YOU ONE MORE RESULT OF YOUR COOPERATION.



MMMMM

LET'S HAVE OUR BABY, ANNE. LET'S HAVE OUR OWN BABY.

OUR OWN FAMILY, HERE... ON THIS EARTH.


WAAAAH!
GAAAAH!

LET ME HOLD THE BABY, MOM!

ME NEXT!

IS IT A BOY OR A GIRL?

IT'S A BOY!

HE'S THE TWENTY-THIRD CHILD, ISN'T HE, DAD? WHAT WILL BE HIS NAME?

DAD TOLD ME HIS NAME WILL BE JOHANN.

WEIRD..!

WAAAH!

JOHANN! YOU ARE THE LAST OF OUR CHILDREN. YOU HAVE SO MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE YOU SURPRISED?

I THINK WE SHOULD CHANGE HIS NAME. LET'S HAVE A VOTE!

NOW IT'S TIME FOR HIS MILK.

HAVE YOU FIXED THE AIR LEAK AT THE E26 PASSAGE, DEAR?

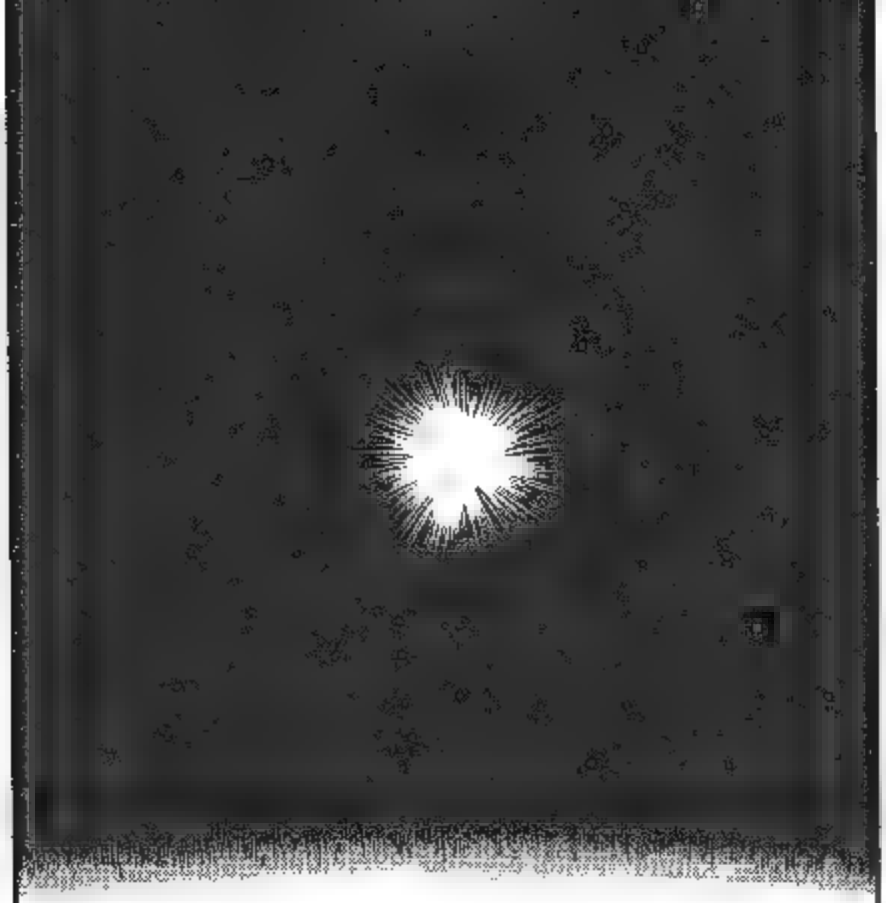
I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT I'LL FIX IT RIGHT NOW.

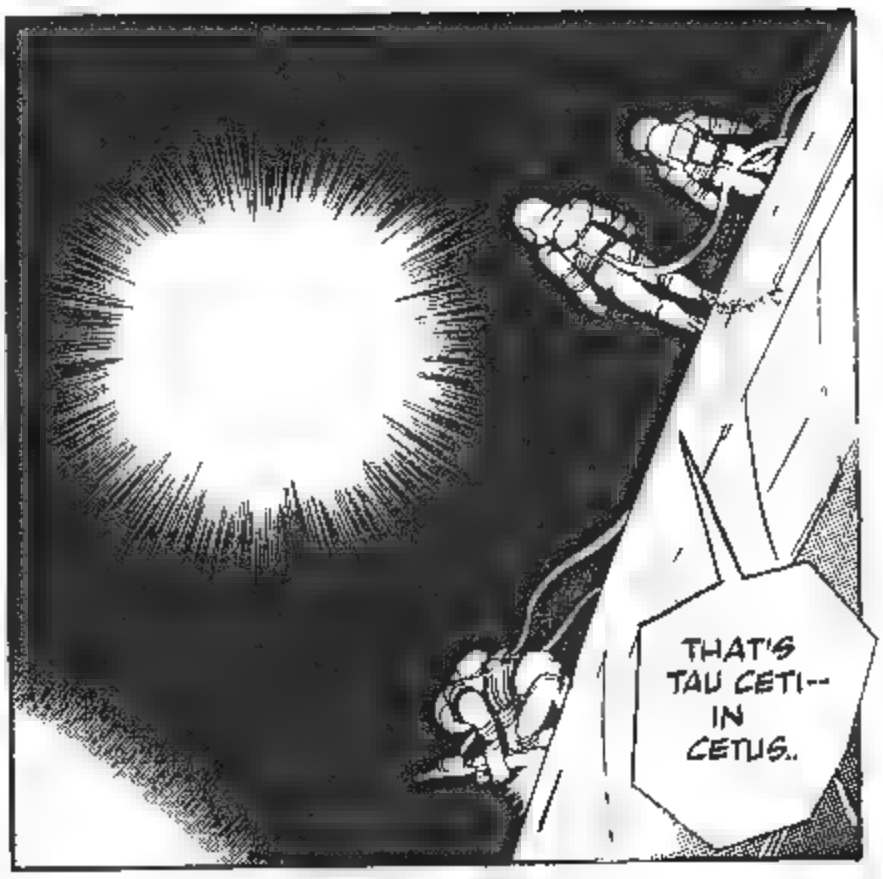
MARY, YOU HOLD HIM-- AND DON'T DROP HIM, OKAY?

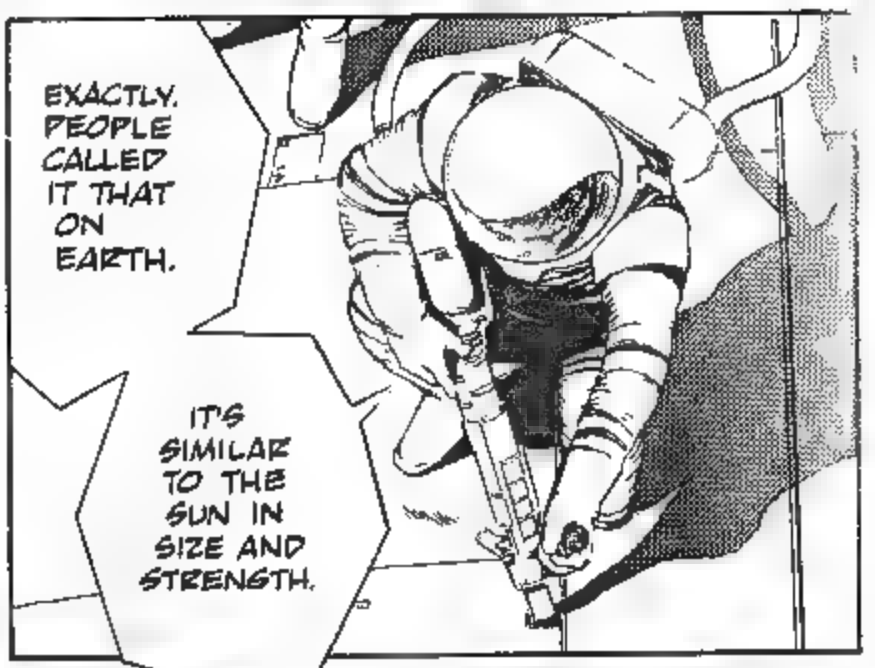
MOM! CAN I GIVE HIM MILK, TOO?

I'LL GO WITH YOU, DAD!

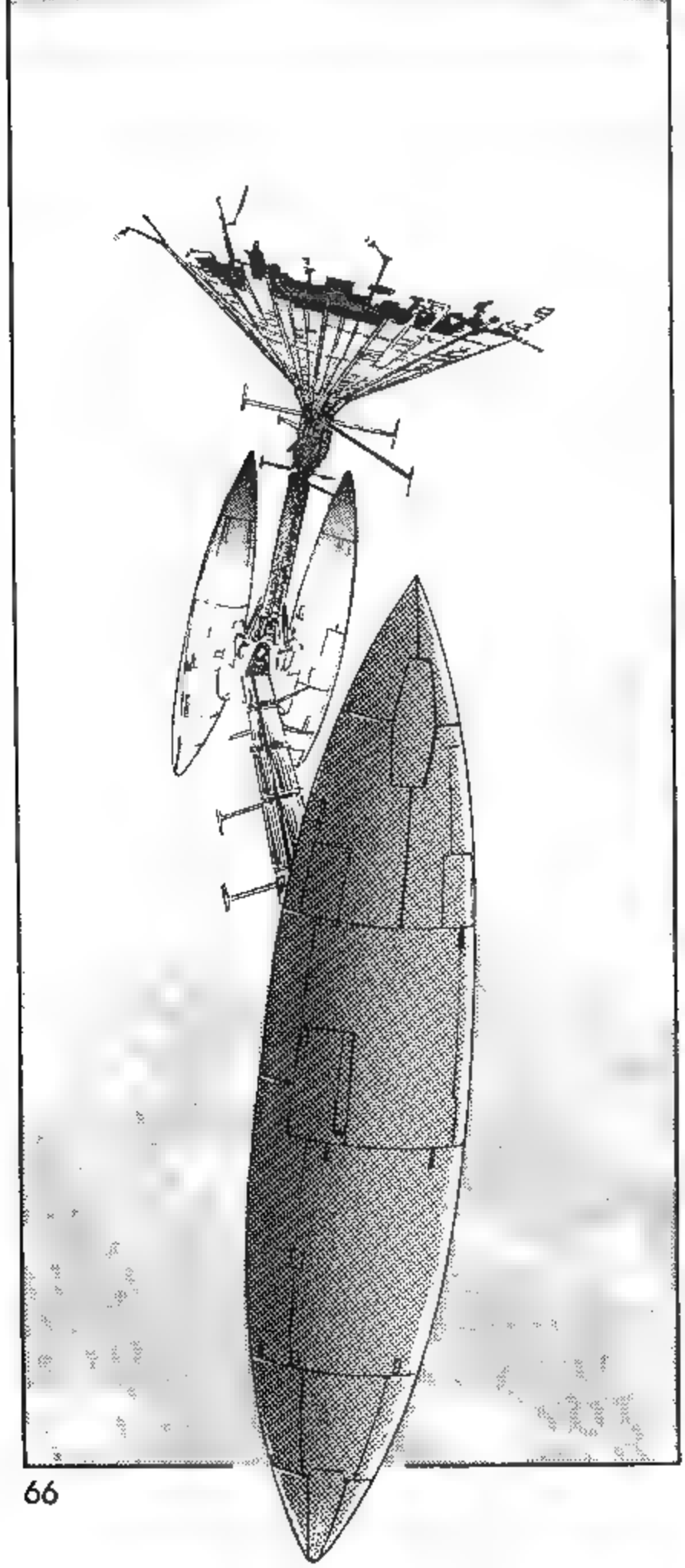
NO, TOBY! YOU HELPED LAST TIME! IT'S MY TURN!




THAT'S TAU CETI-- IN CETUS..


EXACTLY. PEOPLE CALLED IT THAT ON EARTH.
IT'S SIMILAR TO THE SUN IN SIZE AND STRENGTH.

I'VE READ THAT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY THERE WAS A RESEARCH PROJECT NAMED OZMA. THEY TRIED TO RECEIVE ELECTRIC WAVES FROM OTHER CIVILIZATIONS IN THE UNIVERSE. ITS FIRST TARGET WAS TAU CETI.



THAT'S WHY DAD NAMED THIS SECOND PLANET OF TAU "OZMA" IT WAS ALSO THE NAME OF THE COMET THAT BROUGHT US HERE

DEAR, COULD YOU ALSO CHECK THE ANGLE OF THE SOLAR PANELS? I BELIEVE SOMEBODY TOUCHED THE CONTROL CONSOLE

ASKING ON REAL I'LL CHECK IT NOW

DAD CAN WE REALLY LIVE ON OZMA? HOW ARE WE GOING TO LAND THERE?

THE COMPUTER WILL DECIDE THE COMPUTER FOUND THIS PLANET.

WHILE WE ARE IN OBIT, IT IS SEARCHING THE PLANET

IT'S MAKING SURE OZMA IS A SAFE PLACE FOR HUMAN BEINGS TO LIVE. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, DAD?

YES... WHILE THE COMPUTER HAS BEEN CHECKING, YOU GUYS WERE BORN AND BEGAN TO GROW UP...

YOU'LL LAND SOON...

IS OZMA LIKE THE EARTH, MOM?

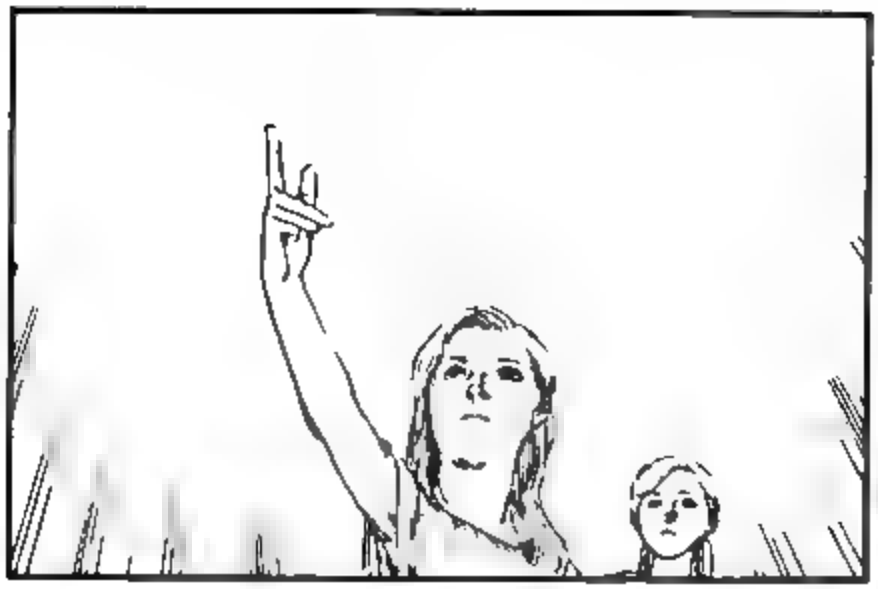
WELL, THE EARTH WAS A BEAUTIFUL BLUE PLANET LIKE THIS ONE, KAREN... THOUGH THE EARTH WE KNOW IS THE ONE FROM A LONG TIME AGO.

IS THE EARTH FAR AWAY FROM HERE?

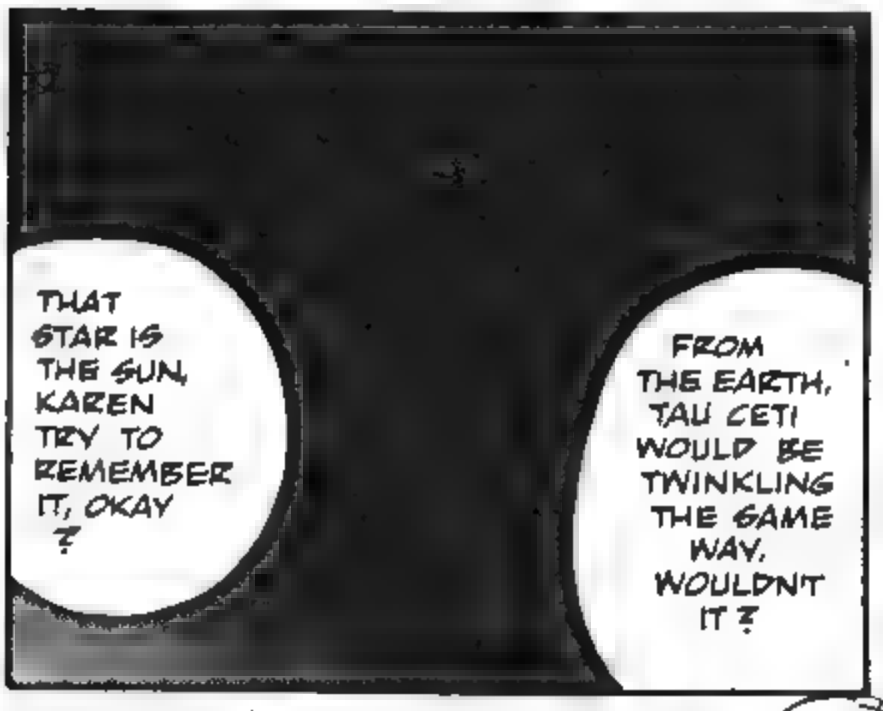
DON'T YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO EARTH?

NO. WE HAVE YOU, OUR CHILDREN...

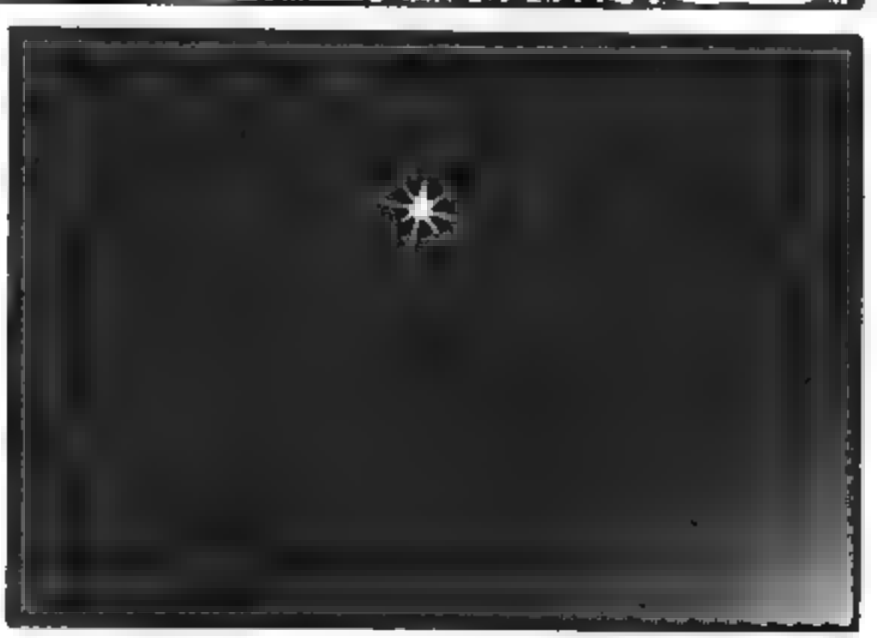
..AND YOU HAVE THIS PLANET, OZMA.



A LONG TIME AGO, THERE WERE MANY PEOPLE WHO IMAGINED MANY THINGS WHILE LOOKING AT A STARRY SKY-- JUST LIKE US.
THEY THOUGHT, "SOMEDAY, I WANT TO GO TO THAT STAR. WILL THERE EVER BE A DAY MAN CAN VISIT THE STARS?"


THAT STAR IS THE SUN, KAREN TRY TO REMEMBER IT, OKAY ?
FROM THE EARTH, TAU CETI WOULD BE TWINKLING THE SAME WAY, WOULDN'T IT ?

MANY PEOPLE LIVED AND DIED DREAMING SUCH DREAMS.
AND NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE HAVE COME TO ONE OF THOSE STARS.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, ANN ?



OH, CHRIS! WHAT HAPPENED? WHY SO SUDDENLY ?

IT'S THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED TO MOM!! LET'S MOVE HER TO THE EMERGENCY CAPSULE!

NO, DAD! THE CAPSULE IS OUT OF ORDER RIGHT NOW!

THEN LET'S USE THE OXYGEN SYSTEM. TOSY-- HURRY!

KAREN, BRING THE MEDICINE FROM THE CABINET !

CHRIS! YOU ARE ALL RIGHT, AREN'T YOU? YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT..!

NOW, TOBY, MARK, AND ELLEN-- BLOW IT OUT AT THE SAME TIME, OKAY?

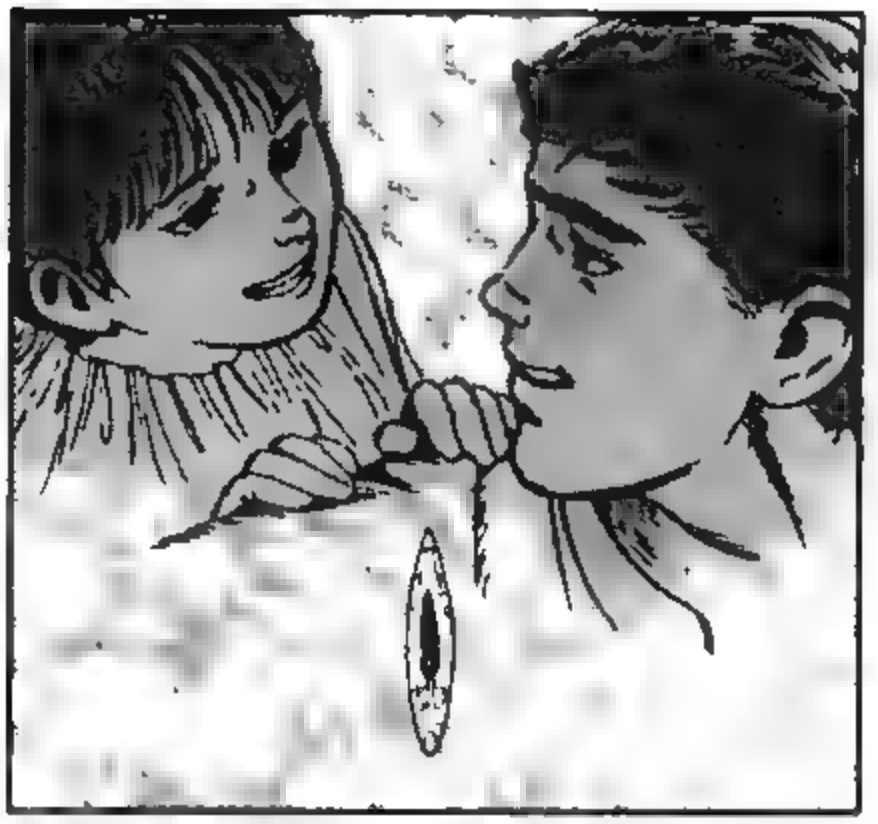
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

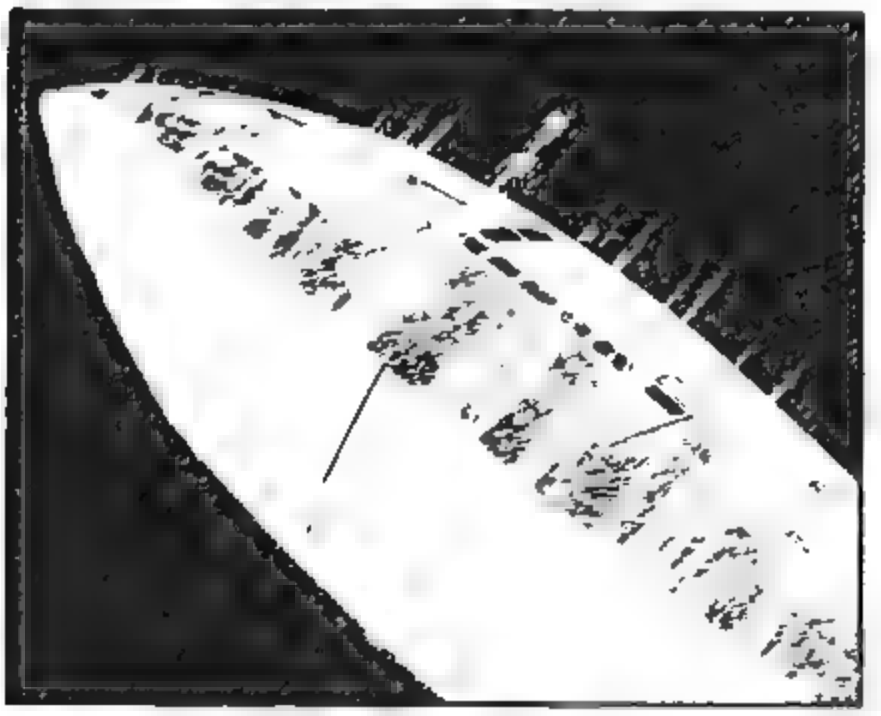
DON'T PUSH ME!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

AND HERE'S YOUR PRESENT-- THE SEEDS OF ***WHEAT***. AND FOR ELLEN, THESE ***SUNFLOWER*** SEEDS. MAKE THEM GROW CAREFULLY.

AFTER LANDING ON OZMA, MAKE THE PLANTS OF EARTH FLOURISH, ALL RIGHT?





SPLASH

CHEEE

SAAAA

shshh

SSHHH

I CAN SMELL ALL KINDS OF THINGS!

WIND--THE SKY IS SO BLUE!

IT'S SO BIG--SO BIG!

WAIT, TOBY!

I CAN SEE THE MOUNTAINS! THEY GO ON *FOREVER*!

YAAAAH

HOORAY

DAD! MOM! COME AND LOOK! IT'S *WONDERFUL*!

COME HERE, JOHANN! I'LL TAKE YOU--BUT HURRY!

MOM... D-DAD...

GO AHEAD WITH THE *OTHERS*, JOHANN...

YES, DEAR. IT'S *YOUR* WORLD!

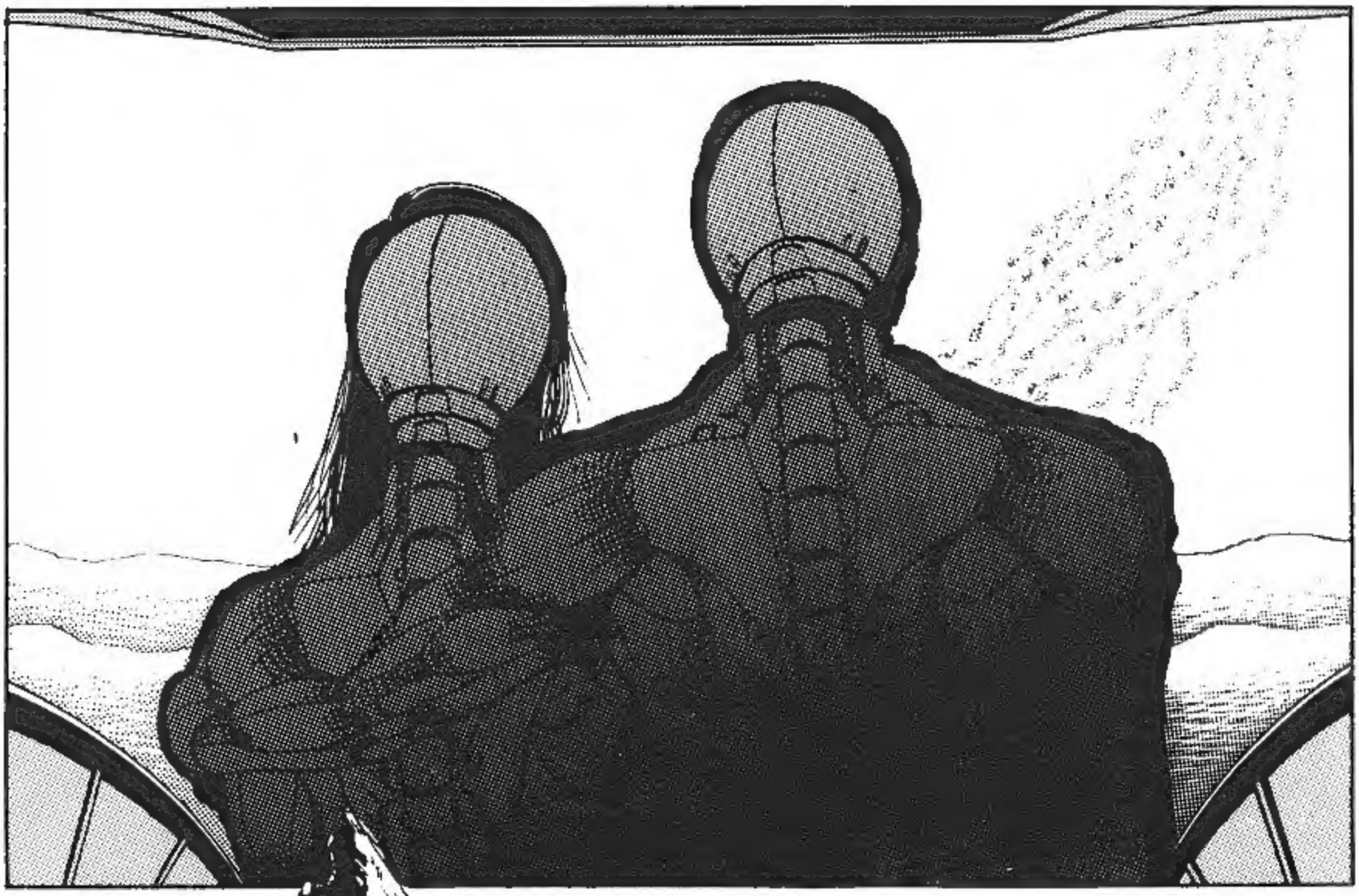
THERE IS NOTHING MORE WE CAN TEACH YOU...

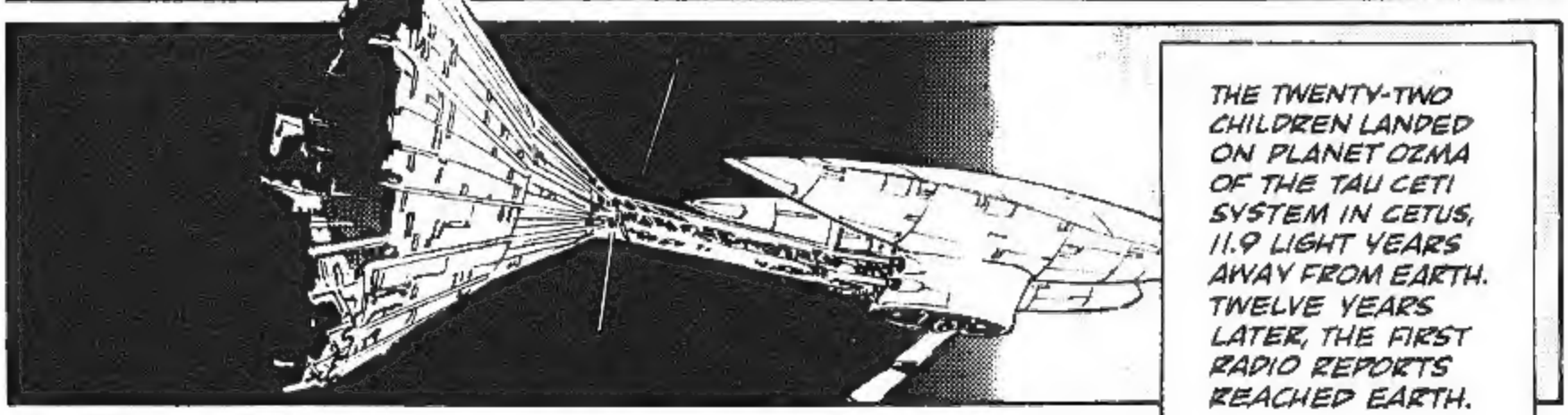
KACHIK

KACHIIK

FUNCTION COMPLETED.

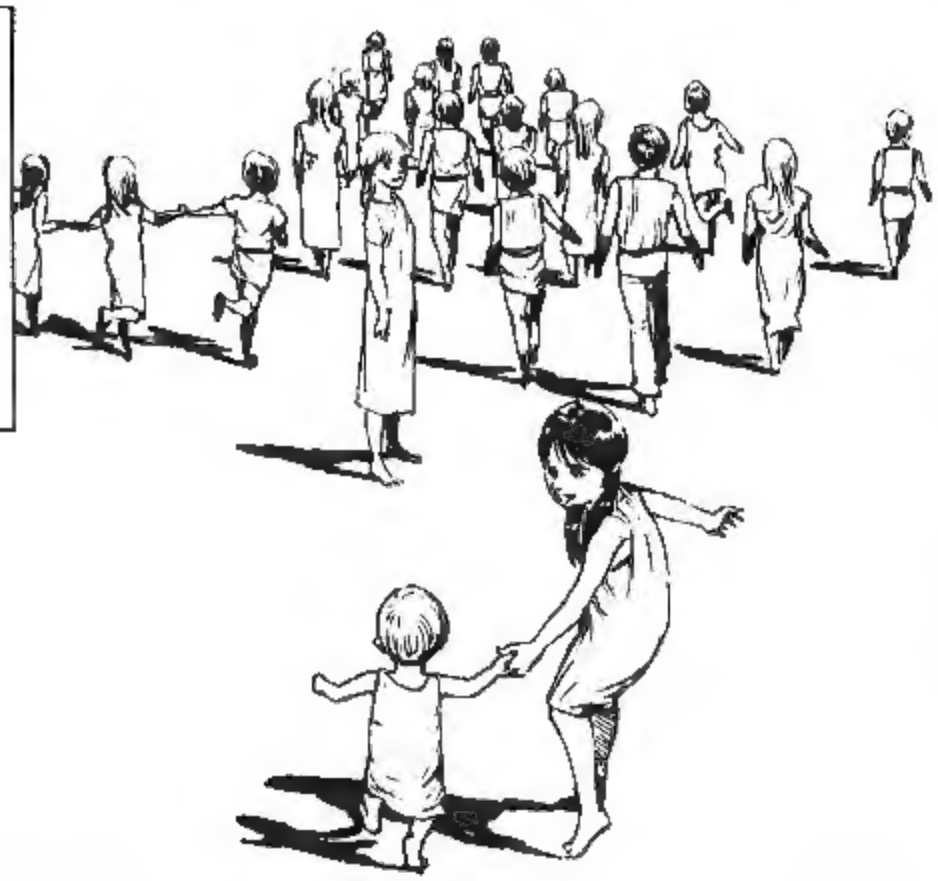
CHARACTER CREATION SYSTEM, OFF.





THE TWENTY-TWO CHILDREN LANDED ON PLANET OZMA OF THE TAU CETI SYSTEM IN CETUS, 11.9 LIGHT YEARS AWAY FROM EARTH. TWELVE YEARS LATER, THE FIRST RADIO REPORTS REACHED EARTH.

THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT, HOWEVER, NEVER KNEW OF ITS SUCCESS.



IT HAD BEEN 375 YEARS SINCE THE SPACESHIP HAD LEFT THEIR SOLAR SYSTEM.